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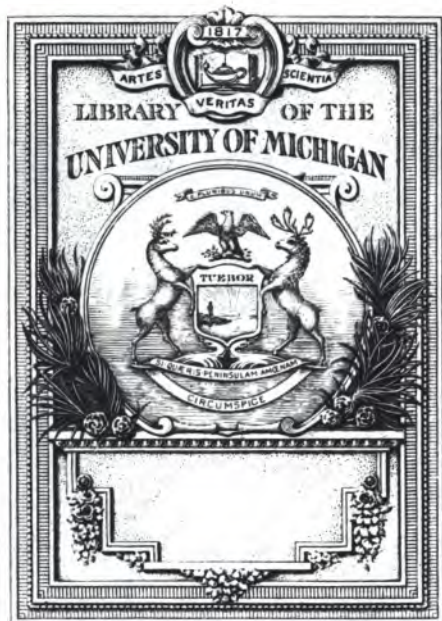
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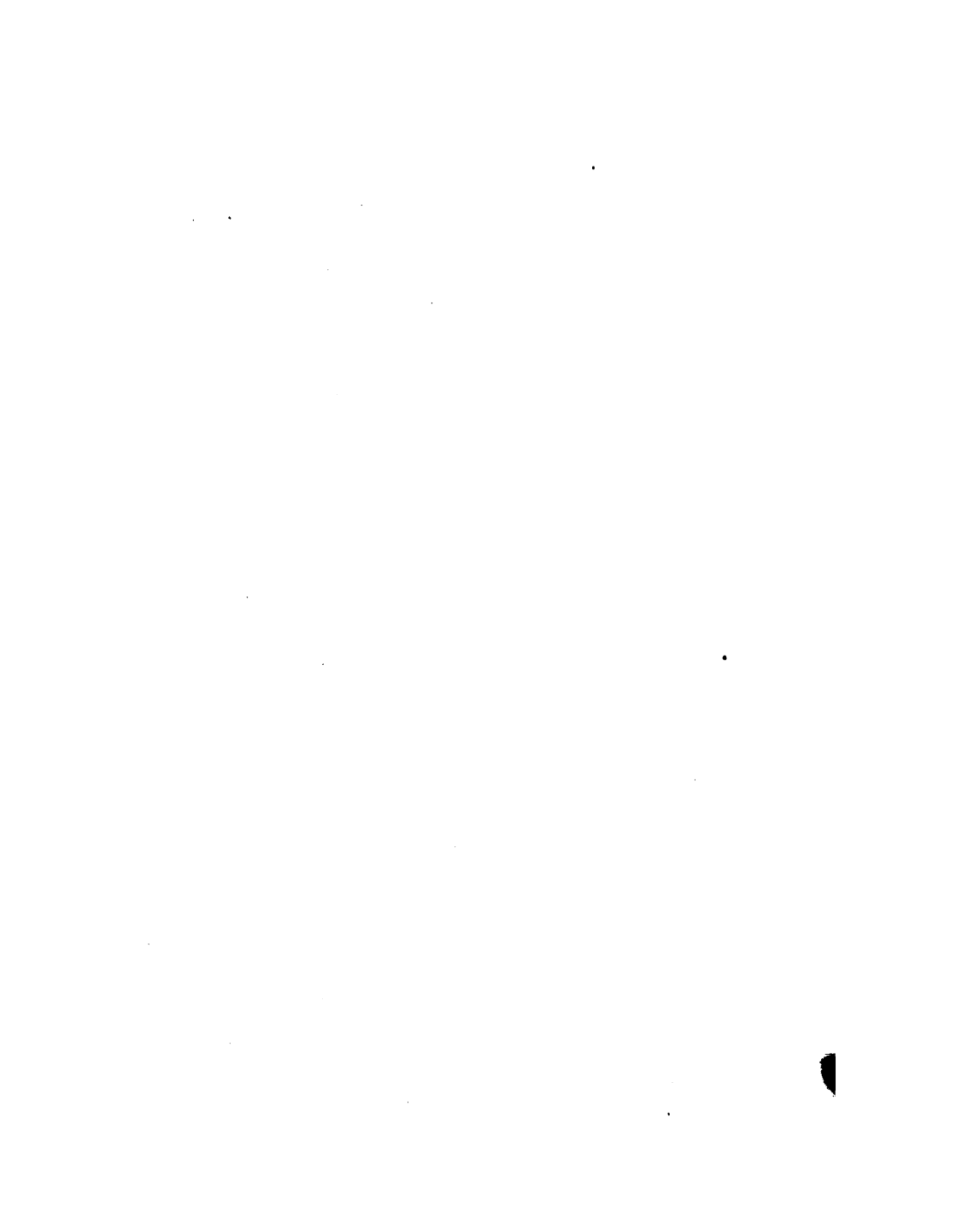


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*New*  
*Wagging*  
*of*  
*Old Tales*

BY

TWO WAGS

*John Kendrick Bangs*

*Illustrated by Oliver Herford*

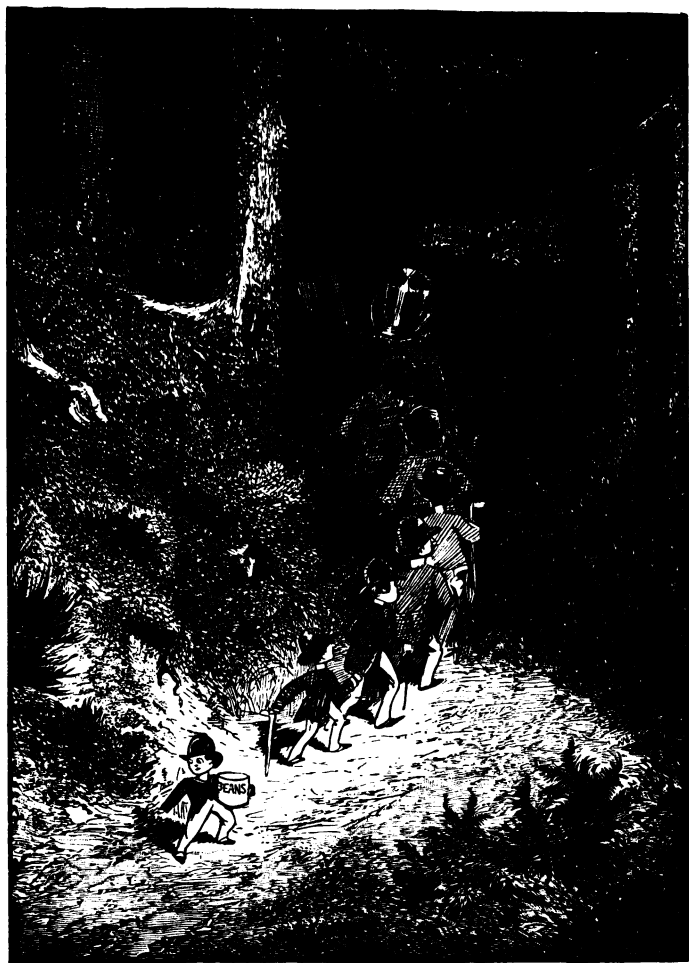


BOSTON

TICKNOR AND COMPANY

211 Tremont Street

1888



*New*  
*Waggings*  
*of*  
*Old Tales*

BY

TWO WAGS

*John Kendrick Young*  
*Franklin D. Young*  
ILLUSTRATED BY OLIVER HERFORD



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1888

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University Press:  
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE.

# Dedicated

TO

FRANK DEMPSTER  
SHERMAN,

BY HIS TRULY,

J. K. BANGS,

*who seizes this opportunity to  
inform his friends that he is  
in no way responsible for the  
verses which have crept into  
the following pages.*

JOHN KENDRICK  
BANGS,

BY HIS FRIEND,

F. D. SHERMAN,

*who begs to acquaint the pub-  
lic with the fact that the prose  
portions of this work have been  
inserted against his expressed  
wishes and in defiance of his  
advice.*

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## PROLOGUE.



It seemed a fairly good idea. The children were to be given an entertainment, and some one suggested that an authors' reading of the tales of childhood be tried, provided the authors were willing. Unfortunately investigation showed that the authors were all dead, otherwise they would doubtless have assisted gladly.

It was then proposed that such kind gentlemen as the Eminent Realist, the Distinguished Diplomat, the Illustrious Laureate, and others should be asked

to read the stories for the dead authors, and happily they were unanimously willing.

So it happened. The children gathered, and in their hands were placed daintily-printed programmes setting forth in all the glory of æsthetic type that “ ‘Hop O’ My Thumb’ would be read to them by the Eminent Realist; that the Apostle of Obscurity would recite a myth; that the Leader of the Fleshly School would charm their ears with the ‘History of Mary and the Lamb;’ that the Disciple of Ambiguity would tell of ‘Jack and the Beanstalk;’ that the African Reminiscencer would recount the thrilling story of Rumpelslopogaas; while ‘Beauty and the Beast’ and ‘Cinderella’ would be treated respectively by the Great Romancer and

the Illustrious Laureate." By common consent the chairman of the occasion was to be the Distinguished Diplomat, whom the children universally admired because of his familiarity with his mother tongue and every one of its ancestors, dead or otherwise.

The day was propitious; none of the proxy authors disappointed, and the proceedings were exactly as they are set down in the following pages.





OPENING REMARKS BY  
THE DISTINGUISHED  
DIPLOMAT.

---

WE must be a strong combination of uninteresting vacuity and fatuous imbecility, or must have been sent into the world unfurnished with that modulating and restraining balance-wheel which we call a sense of the beautiful, who in his old age is unable to appreciate with all the ardor of youthful enthusiasm those ever-inspiring yet simple tales which have been handed down, almost I might say *ab urbe condita*, to us, our children, *et nati*



*natorum et qui nascentur ab illis*, without being accused of going *extra muros veritatis*.

“*Vive le roi!*” was an expression commonly used in France in the days prior to the great Revolution, — *ante bellum* days, as the Latins so beautifully termed them. May I not adapt to the present occasion this undying line from French literature, and cry from the depths of my heart, *Vive le Fairoi?* I think I may.

“As I have frequently remarked on other occasions, I should have preferred that this office I am to perform to-day had fallen to another. It has been many years since I have

‘Dag an’ delf in  
Impe and Elfin,’

as our great — I should say England’s great — poet Chaucer might have said upon a similar occasion, had he been

called upon to stand *in loco moderatoris* to so enlightened an assemblage as I see before me. There are others who are better fitted than I to act in this capacity ; but as I have made it one of the invariable rules of my life *nec quære nec spernere honorem*, — *ich dien*.

“ Not to detain you longer than is necessary, — for, as Bacon has said, when things are come to the execution there is no secrecy comparable to celerity, — I will introduce to you the Eminent Realist, with whom, in accordance with the scriptural prophecy, ‘ By their works ye shall know them,’ many of you are doubtless already familiar. The distinguished gentleman has kindly consented to lay before us the particulars of the pathetic career of ‘ Hop O’ My Thumb.’ ”

After the applause which greeted these remarks had subsided, the Eminent Real-

ist, adjusting his necktie and taking his manuscript from the upper right-hand pocket of his coat, advanced to the edge of the platform and read:—

#### THE RISE OF HOP O' MY THUMB.



WHEN Barclay Williams went to interview Hop O' My Thumb for the "Solid Men of Fairy-land" series which he undertook to finish up for the "Decade" after he had paid the debts of that newspaper and acquired its ownership, My Thumb received him in his private office by previous appointment.

Barclay hesitated, as he entered the door, whether he should wipe his feet on the mat or not. To be sure there was a sign requesting him to do so pinned upon the upper left-hand panel of the door, but a large sea-green inscription, WELCOME, upon the mat itself seemed to forbid any such familiarity. Unfortunately his embarrassment was considerably augmented by Hop O' My Thumb himself, who, upon hearing a footstep without, cleared his throat and pushing his chair backward about two feet from his desk began to wonder whose footstep it was. He thought he recognized the squeak of the shoes as belonging to Barclay, but he was not certain enough on the point to come to any definite conclusion; so turning half way round he arose from his chair and started to walk toward the door, glancing furtively at the transom as he did so.

"Come in," he said.

Barclay still hesitated. There was something in Hop O' My Thumb's tone that contributed further to his uncertainty on the question of the door-mat. If he wiped his feet on My Thumb's WELCOME, My Thumb might be angry; on the other hand, if he disregarded the warning on the door-panel he still might give offence. A hurried glance at his shoes decided him. They were not at all muddy, and then he remembered that he had come from his house in a cab and that the shoes were new. He smiled quietly to himself, and remembering his early athletic successes at college he jumped easily over the mat and found himself confronted by his host, whose misgivings as to whether or not Barclay was a creditor had led him to put on his seven-league boots in the interval between his invitation to enter and the entrance of his guest.

---

"Oh, it's you, is it?" said Hop O' somewhat absently, spurning a three-legged stool across the room to where Barclay stood and motioning to him to be seated.

"How did you guess?" asked Barclay, surprised at this sudden recognition.

"I don't know," replied Hop O' My Thumb with charming *naïveté*. "Because you look so like yourself, perhaps, or because you—" then he stopped and fondled his watch-chain nervously. It was evident that he could not think of any other reason. Barclay felt his embarrassment coming over him again, and inadvertently broke the end of his lead-pencil.

"What do you want, young man?" continued My Thumb, recovering his composure with some apparent effort.

"Your life," said Barclay. "We want the lives of all the great men of Fairyland for the 'Decade.'"

Hop O' My Thumb was somewhat startled at Barclay's first words, and a nervous movement of the legs placed him some distance from the Interviewer. He had forgotten to remove the seven-league boots. Another nervous twitch, however, brought him back to Barclay's side in time to hear his last words. Barclay wondered at this sudden disappearance and equally sudden reappearance of his host, but he was too well bred to express any surprise. He merely made a mental note of it for the treatise on the Eccentricities of Genius, which he was preparing for a future number of the "Pacific Monthly."

"We want to hear about this Ogre business, you know—and—" here Barclay faltered ever so slightly. He was a Bostonian, and he was proud of it, but he did not want to appear too proud. With much effort he finished his sentence, how-

—

ever. "And how you were befriended by the — the beans." Barclay blushed.

Hop O' My Thumb looked at him silently and then laughed. He was amused at the Interviewer's embarrassment, and made no effort to conceal it.

"All right," he said; "where do you want me to begin?"

"Might begin with your poor but honest parents," suggested Barclay, elevating his eyebrows.

A smile betrayed that Hop O' My Thumb possessed a sense of humor. He had read the life of his neighbor John the Slayer of Ogres, in the preceding number of the "Decade," and he appreciated Barclay's satirical allusion to the opening chapters of his rival's life.

"Well," he replied sadly, "I had 'em."

"Seventeen children, all girls except the boys, I suppose," Barclay cut in.



"Yes, seventeen, and all girls except the boys," repeated Hop O' My Thumb, accepting Barclay's flippant query as fact. It was not fact, but then Hop O' thought that if Barclay was satisfied he ought to be; and then, too, Barclay knew just what the readers of the "Decade" wanted, while he did not.

"Hop O' My Thumb," wrote Barclay, "was the son of poor but honest parents. There were seventeen children in the family, all of whom were girls except — by the way, how many brothers had you?" he asked, laying down his pen.

"Seventeen, I think you said," replied Hop O' My Thumb, throwing his left leg across his right knee.

"Oh, come now!" ejaculated Barclay, a little out of patience. He did not like to be balked so early in the interview, and he could not help feeling that perhaps



Hop O' My Thumb was making game of him. "You just said they were all girls except the boys."

"Well," replied Hop O' My Thumb, "so they were. But we were all excep-

tions in my family. It was an exceptional family, you know."

"Very well," returned Barclay, with a comical look of resignation in his face. "Go on and tell me all about it. You were the biggest of the lot, I presume," he added sarcastically.

"I think, Mr. Williams," replied Hop O' with a quiet dignity, "that if you intend to make this a satirical article you would do better to leave me out of it."

"Oh no," said the Interviewer, unabashed; "a biography of Hop O' My Thumb with you left out would be like Boston deprived of the east wind."

"Hop O' My Thumb," wrote Barclay, "was so diminutive in stature that his progenitors conferred upon him the appellation by which he is now so generally and popularly known. But Nature, as if regretting the exigencies which had com-

pelled her to make him physically weak, had more than compensated him by the psychical strength with which she endowed him.

"There," he added, putting his pen behind his ear, "how does that go?"

"Very well indeed," was Hop O's enthusiastic rejoinder. "It is the most expressive and eloquent way of saying, 'Little, but oh my!' I have ever seen. Are you going to write the whole of this life in words of ten syllables?"

"One must be original," said Barclay, apologetically; "and besides, it must be made so that children will comprehend and be instructed by it."

"Of course," said Hop O'. "I've noticed that all the one-syllabled editions of my reminiscences have had to be elucidated by very highly-colored cuts. Yours is not an illustrated paper, I believe?"

"No, I'm happy to say it is not," replied Barclay a little impatiently.

"I'm sorry about that," said My Thumb, reflectively. "It would have seemed more homelike to appear in an illustrated weekly. Father was a wood-cutter, you know."

As Hop O' My Thumb spoke these words the door-bell rang and he excused himself for a moment to answer it. In the interim Barclay numbered the pages of his manuscript consecutively, and leaning back in his chair jotted down a few lead-pencil notes.

"Children retire to bed."

"Hop 'O My Thumb suffers from insomnia."

Barclay chuckled as he wrote this.

"Too short to sleep long, I suppose," he remarked to himself. Then he wrote, —

"Overhears parents weeping because of shortness of the larder."

"Hop decides to prepare for the worst, and pockets the next day's bean supply."

When Barclay had written thus far the point of his pencil broke, and while he was meditating whether or not to re-sharpen it, Hop O' My Thumb returned. Barclay watched him curiously as he entered, and noticed that his host took particular pains to elude the door-mat, just as he had done. He was secretly pleased that he did so. It made him feel more at his ease than he had felt at any time since he had entered the house.

"Back again?" he asked quietly, as Hop O' My Thumb entered.

"I don't know," retorted Hop O' My Thumb, absently. "What? Oh yes. I beg your pardon, I was thinking of something else. Yes, I'm back again. How far have you got?"

"I have reached the point where you

surreptitiously removed the beans from the larder," replied Barclay, glancing at his notes.

"They were n't beans, Mr. Williams, they were pebbles," said Hop O' My Thumb, gazing at Barclay with astonishment.

"Oh, I know that. But we've got to give it a touch or two of local color—a contemporaneousness, you know."

"Well, it seems to me that it's a contemporaneousness that I don't know, and don't care to know, that you've got hold of. If you think I'm going to cut off entirely from my past you're mistaken, and if you don't want my life as I lived it you mustn't come to me for points. Go to the newspapers."

"Well, well, have your own way. Pebbles it is—pebbles it are—pebb—"

"Never mind," said Hop O' My Thumb, kindly, "if pebbles mix you up so, make

it beans. I took the beans, and when my poor but honest parents lost my nineteen brothers and myself in the woods, I dropped the beans one by one along the roadway, and when night came on, with the aid of the street lamps and the beans together, I led my ten sorrowing little relatives back to their home, much to the surprise of my father and mother, who were having an oyster supper in honor of their bereavement as we entered."

Bärclay stroked his chin and blushed. Why he did the former he knew not, but for the latter he could readily account. He felt that some one should blush for such inconsistency and patent perversion of fact as he had just listened to, and as Hop O' My Thumb showed no disposition to do it, he thought it his bounden duty to assume his host's responsibilities.



"Mr. Hop O' My Thumb," he said gravely, after some moments' reflection, "do you wish street lamps introduced into this biography?"

"Why not? Are n't they contemporaneous enough?" queried Hop O', biting off the end of his cigar and drawing a match slowly across the sole of his shoe.

Barclay gazed out of the window. He perceived that in spite of the fact that he had been graduated at Harvard, in spite of the fact that he lived on Beacon Street and knew who his grandfather was, Hop O' My Thumb had him. It galled him considerably, but he was too sensible a man to let My Thumb see the true state of his feelings.

"All right. Please continue," was all he said.

Hop O' My Thumb resumed:—

"Mother was glad to see us, and father

with some embarrassment asked us when we got back. I made some inopportune reply, to the effect that we had returned the very moment we arrived, which so enraged father that he sent us all to bed without any supper. The next day we were conducted to the forest again, but not before I had taken the precaution to empty my little missionary bank of its contents, which, for the want of pebb— I beg pardon — beans, I dropped along the road. Unfortunately I failed to notice that father walked behind me, picking up the dimes and nickels as I dropped them."

At this point Hop O' My Thumb was visibly affected, and Barclay not wishing to intrude upon his grief, went across the street to purchase a cigar.

When he returned, Hop O' had regained his wonted composure, and offered Barclay a light. This the newspaper man

graciously accepted, and placing his hat upon the mantel-piece he reseated himself at the desk.

"That night," said Hop O' My Thumb, "all thirteen of us were irrevocably lost."

"Thirteen is an unlucky number," suggested Barclay, with a vain hope of driving Hop O' back to the original number of brothers.

"I know it; but don't you think it makes the story more weird and interesting?" replied Hop O'. "You might also say that the missionaries lost thirteen dollars by my foolishness and my father's watchfulness, if you think it would add to the story. Of course," he resumed, "it rained that night, and as luck would have it all the boys had brought their canes. There was not a solitary umbrella in the whole party. That adds another item to the long list of mishaps attendant on thirteen.

It is very unlucky for thirteen men to be out in a rain-storm with canes."

"It is," said Barclay, looking despairingly at Hop O'. "Suppose we let the number drop? It may kill one of us."

"As you please," responded My Thumb, good-naturedly; "half that number of brothers is enough for me."

"What did you do when the rain came on?" asked Barclay, not unmusically knocking his pencil against his teeth.

"Let her come," flippantly replied My Thumb with a pleasant smile, which displayed a fine white set of teeth of which their owner was justly proud.

"I knew that," was Barclay's indignant response, "but what else did you do?"

"Got wet," replied My Thumb, his smile extending into a loud guffaw. Then noticing a look of pained surprise on his caller's face, he hastened to add, "We

pulled the bell-knob of a solitary castle that we perceived on the neighboring moor. The bell responded, as I rather suspected it would, and after a temporary lull of say five or ten minutes, the lady of the house appeared and earnestly requested us to move on."

"And you moved?" queried Barclay, pulling at his trousers to keep them from bagging at the knees.

"Not an inch," said My Thumb with dignity. "We moved in, the whole six and a half of us—"

"Now, see here," interrupted Barclay, his ire again rising; "what do you mean by 'six and a half of us?'"

"I thought we settled on it that thirteen brothers were at least twice too many?" said Hop O'.

"Well, we did, but six and a half is such an odd number," rejoined Barclay, irritably.

---

"Not at all," said Hop O'. "If it were seven or five it would be an odd —"

"Oh, I don't mean that way," retorted Barclay, tapping the oil-cloth with his toe. "You could n't have six and a half brothers; the idea is absurd."

"I don't see why," replied Hop O', with an injured look. "A man can have a half-brother, I believe, can't he?"

Barclay was silent. Hop O' My Thumb's statement admitted of no denial, so he thought it best to appear satisfied at the turn things had taken. After an interval of some minutes Hop O' My Thumb resumed:—

"We were rather sorry after we had entered the house so uncereemoniously, as we found it belonged to a gentleman whose chief delight consisted in the devouring of little boys on the half-shell. Mrs. Ogre gave us a chance to leave the place before

her husband returned from the Museum, where he displayed his physical peculiarities to the populace at a dime per head; but before we could get out of the house," — Hop O' My Thumb called it *heouse*, — "the proprietor walked in hungrier than a girl of sixteen after a german."

"Is she anything like an American girl of thirty after an Englishman?" queried Barclay, flippantly.

"Fortunately," continued Hop O', with a scornful smile at the Interviewer's sally, "the ice-chest was large, and we managed to hide before the Ogre came into the room. But our fancied security didn't last long.

"'Do I smell any little boys around here, madame?' the Ogre asked. of his wife.

"'Yes, husband,' said the poor woman, 'there is a little cold youth downstairs,

left over from Sunday's dinner. I—I—I thought you'd like it hashed for to-morrow's breakfast,' she added.

"'All right,' replied the giant; 'I'm glad you have it, for little boys are out of season just now, and I can't get any nice ones in the market. Hello! what's that?' he added sharply.

"It was a very unfortunate thing, but my youngest brother, boy-like, had constructed a slide on one of the Ogre's ice-cakes, and while indulging in youthful sport he fell, making such a noise that our presence was revealed. We were very much frightened, and offered to let the Ogre have our little half-brother if he would let the rest of us go; but he was adamant."

"That's hard," cut in Barclay.

Hop O' My Thumb got up from his chair, and crossing the room opened a




drawer in the small mahogany escritoire which stood opposite the window. After rummaging around among his papers for a few minutes he picked up a small pocket edition of Webster's Dictionary, and turned rapidly over the "A" pages until he came apparently to the word he wanted. He then replaced the book where he found it, and locking the drawer returned to his chair. Barclay gazed at him wonderingly for a moment and then asked, —

"Well?"

"You are right," said Hop O', "adamant is hard."

Barclay smiled wanly. It was all he could do, and he did it as wanly as he knew how. He saw that Hop O' My Thumb had missed his true vocation in life and it saddened him. He tore a small bit of paper from the edge of a sample



copy of the "Decade" that he always carried with him, and threw it pensively into the waste-basket.

Hop O' for the first time during the interview seemed embarrassed. The thought flashed across his mind that he had gone too far, and he was repentant. It was some moments before he spoke again, but when he did speak there was an indescribable tenderness in his voice that Barclay had not given him credit for.

"Then," he said softly, "we were filed away upstairs to fatten, and to those who know us it is needless to say that we did fatten."

"It is not a laborious task to fatten at another's expense," said Barclay in parenthesis.

"The night before the festival at which my brothers and I were to be served,"



continued Hop O', resolved to ignore the insinuating remarks of his visitor, "I bethought me of a method of escape. I hurriedly dressed my family up in the clothing of the Ogre's daughters, and when the butcher came that night he immolated the young ladies instead of us, and we climbed down the lightning-rod into the moat and took to the woods. The next morning, when the Ogre discovered the trick we had played

on him, he was very much annoyed, so he put on his seven-league boots and started after us. But I had a *ruse* for him."

"A Charlotte russe, I suppose," put in Barclay, dryly.

"No," rejoined Hop O', "not a Charlotte russe; we could n't sponge cake enough for that. We six and a half brothers each took a different route, and the Ogre got so tired trying to make up his mind as to which of us was the most luscious that he fell asleep. Then came my chance. I was on friendly terms with the sea-serpent at the Ogre's Museum, and I knew he was jealous of the Giant whose name was printed in larger letters on the bills than his. I immediately despatched my half-brother to him with word to come to me at once with his stinger. He came, and was only too glad to fasten his fangs

on the Ogre, who died in great agony about two hours later."

"There is no poison like jealousy," said Barclay, whistling a low tune to himself.

"No, indeed; and the sea-serpent is a good deal of a green-eyed monster, you know," replied Hop O', relighting his cigar. "I searched the Ogre's pockets and found a certified check for all his wealth, payable to bearer, with a signed deed to all his property in blank. I felt rather sorry for his wife. She had been very good to me during my sojourn in her husband's castle, and I was instrumental in her losing her children; so after I had had the transfer recorded, and had cashed the check, I got her appointed to a post-mastership in Oregon, where she gets a commission on the stamps she sells."

"Of course you sought out your father and mother after acquiring all this wealth?"


said Barclay with a sigh of relief that the biography was so nearly completed.

"Well, ahem!" replied Hop O', nervously, "the fact is I — ah — by the way, take a handful of these souvenir pebbles," he said, turning away his head to hide the blush which suffused his cheek, and taking half a dozen small stones from his pocket.

"Hop O' My Thumb has been known to blush," wrote Barclay in his note-book. Then he said "Pebbles? What are they for?"

"Oh, they helped me find my way home. They may help you to find yours," returned My Thumb, pointing toward the door in a suggestive manner. "You ought to write up this interview while it's fresh, and you doubtless wish to get to work on it."

Hop O' My Thumb said *voyk* for work, but Barclay understood him nevertheless.



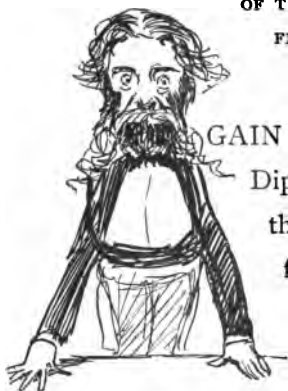
“Yes,” he said, “I do wish to get to work on it, although an interview as fresh as this has been will keep a long time;” and then he slammed the door violently and was gone.

“If that man makes me out a Munchausen, I’ll kill him!” said Hop O’ My Thumb, getting up and throwing his cigar-stump out of the window.



INTRODUCTION  
OF THE LEADER OF THE  
FLESHLY SCHOOL.

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GAIN the Distinguished Diplomat stepped to the edge of the platform and wished that some one else had been called upon to perform the pleasant duty of introducing the readers. "For," said he, "I have never been afflicted with the *cacoëthes loquendi*,—indeed, what *cacoëthes* I have is more *scribendi* than otherwise. But *bon gré mal gré je suis ici tout de même*.

"The great Leader of the Fleshly School whose name is next *sur le tapis* was in-



vited to wag for us *à discrétion* the tale of Mary's Lamb; but a glance at the manuscript a few moments since convinced me that the *beaux esprits* of the poet had led him to adorn the tale with a few facetious flights of fancy unfitted to the present occasion. However, *humanum est errare et, mutatis mutandis, revenons à nos moutons.*"

The Poet, blushing deeply, bowed to the audience and began.

MARY AND THE  
LAMB.



MARY,—what melodies mingle  
To murmur her musical name !  
It makes all one's finger-tips tingle

Like fagots, the food of the flame :

About her an ancient tradition  
A romance delightfully deep  
Has woven in juxtaposition  
With one little sheep, —

One dear little lamb that would follow  
Her footsteps, unwearily fain,  
Down dale, over hill, over hollow,  
To school and to hamlet again ;  
A gentle companion whose beauty  
Consisted in snow-driven fleece,  
And whose most imperative duty  
Was keeping the peace.

His eyes were as beads made of glassware,  
His lips were coquettishly curled,  
His capers made many a lass swear  
His caper-sauce baffled the world ;  
His tail had a wag when it relished  
A sip of the milk in the pail, —  
And this fact has largely embellished  
The wag of this tale.

One calm summer day when the sun was  
A great golden globe in the sky,  
One mild summer morn when the fun was  
Unspeakably clear in his eye,  
He tagged after exquisite Mary,  
And over the threshold of school  
He tripped in a temper contrary,  
And splintered the rule.

A great consternation was kindled  
Among all the scholars, and some  
Confessed their affection had dwindled  
For lamby, and looked rather glum :  
But Mary's schoolmistress quick beckoned  
The children away from the jam,  
And said, *sotto voce*, she reckoned  
That Mame loved the lamb.

Then all up the spine of the rafter  
There ran a most risible shock,  
And sorrow was sweetened with laughter  
At this little lamb of the flock ;

And out spoke the schoolmistress Yankee,  
With rather a New Hampshire whine,  
“Dear pupils, sing Moody and Sankey,  
Hymn ‘Ninety and Nine.’”



Now after this music had finished,  
And silence again was restored,  
The ardor of lamby diminished,  
His quips for a moment were flooded.

52 *NEW WAGGINGS OF OLD TALES.*

Then cried he, "Bah-ed children, you blundered  
When singing that psalmistry, quite :  
I'm labelled by Mary ' Old Hundred,'  
And I'm labelled right."

Then vanished the lambkin in glory,  
A halo of books round his head :  
What furthermore happened the story,  
Alackaday ! cannot be said.  
And Mary, the musical maid, is  
To-day but a shadow in time ;  
Her epitaph, too, I'm afraid is  
Writ only in rhyme.

She's sung by the cook at her ladle  
That stirs up the capering sauce ;  
She's sung by the nurse at the cradle  
When Ba-ba is restless and cross :  
And lamby, whose virtues were legion,  
Dwells ever in songs that we sing,  
He makes a nice dish in this region  
To eat in the spring !

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THE  
DISCIPLE OF AMBIGUITY  
IS INTRODUCED.

---

LONG experience in public life," said the Distinguished Diplomat, "has taught me that ambiguity is the mother of success. The Venus of Milo is doubtless more satisfactory to a large majority of mankind with her arms buried in oblivion than had she been found with those desirable adjuncts at her side. There is a pleasing uncertainty about them. Were they graceful, or were they not ; were they plump, or were they lean? In fact the old, old question arises — was it the Lady or the Tiger?

"The poet spoke truly who said, *Medium tenere beati*. Indeed, happy is this Disciple of Ambiguity, who has kept the middle course, and has permitted his readers to adopt his means to justify their ends. Will the ambiguous gentleman kindly begin?"

There was nothing equivocal in the Disciple's acquiescence, for he at once began to read.

#### THE DISCOURAGER OF CURIOSITY.

IT was nearly a year and seven weeks after the occurrence of that event in the arena of the semi-barbaric Potentate known as the incident of the Beauty and the Beast, that there came to the Bungalow of this Tyrant an Investigating Committee of five commissioners from the State of Michigan. These men, of venerable and dignified as-

pect and demeanor, were received by the Second Deputy Vice-Vizier of the Dead Letter Department, and to him they made known their errand.

"Most noble Office-Holder," said the speaker of the deputation, "it so happened that one of our fellow-citizens was present here, in your very



capital city, on that momentous occasion when a young Lochinvar from the West who had dared to aspire to the salary of one of the Potentate's postmasterships had been placed in the arena in the midst of an assembled multitude of Grand Dukes, Grand Duchesses, Viziers, and Members of Congress, and ordered to open one of



two envelopes, not knowing whether a warrant providing him with a funeral at the expense of the country, or a commission for a fourth-class postmastership under a Democratic Administration, would startle his anxious gaze. Our friend and brother who was then present, most unfortunately found himself seated behind a lady with a theatre bonnet of such stupendous proportions upon her head, that he was unable to see which of the two documents the prisoner received, nor could any but those in the front row see what the fate of the prisoner was. Our townsman, who was a man of super-sensitive feelings, was so overcome with indignation that he fled precipitately from the arena, and, it being in the days before the Interstate Commerce Act went into operation, producing his pass, rode homeward as fast as he could go.

“ We were all very much interested in the story which our countryman told us, as it involved a postmastership, — than which there is nothing dearer to the average patriotic American, — and we were extremely sorry that he did not ask the lady to remove her hat. We hoped, however, that in a few weeks some traveller from your city would come among us and bring us further news; but up to the day upon which we left our country only one traveller had arrived, possibly owing to the fact that since the Inter-State Act has come into play travellers have ceased to arrive in Michigan, — that is, by rail.

“ He, upon hearing our question, was unable to locate the performance, saying that from what he read in the magazines he judged there had been several such performances lately, adding that as theatre hats were still in vogue, he supposed the

mystery was still as great as ever. At last it was determined that the only thing to be done was to send a deputation to this country and to ask the question: Which came forth, Death or the Post-mastership?"

When the Office-Holder had heard the mission of this highly respectable deputation, he led the visitors into the inner office of the Bureau of Information, where they were seated on cushions stuffed with queries as to whether it was the Lady or the Tiger, the Lady who smiled or the Lady who frowned, William Bacon or Lord Shakspeare, and various other horns to various other dilemmas, and where, it being Sunday in the land, lemonade, cake, and other semi-barbaric refreshments were served to them. Then, taking his seat before them, the Office-Holder thus addressed the visitors: —

"Most noble strangers, before answering the question you have come so far to ask, I will relate to you an incident which occurred some years before that to which you have referred."

"His Most High Highness is going to add another story to the edifice," whispered the Chairman to his brother commissioners, touching the alarm of his repeater for the purpose of timing the narrative.

"I hope he will give us an easier one," returned the fourth commissioner, sighing deeply.

"And I hope it may be a chincapin rather than a chest—"

"It is well known," said the narrator quickly, "that in the days of King Alfred there lived a poor woman."

"It is, indeed," returned the Chairman, interrupting the Vizier in a wholly bar-

baric fashion, thus destroying the unities of a story relating to a semi-barbaric age. "I, have read in my copy of 'Every Man His Own Historian,' that there were two poor women living in Alfred's days."

"No doubt there were," replied the narrator with a look of weariness, not relishing the interruption; "but my poor woman was a widow."

"Was this before you married her?" queried a commissioner, innocently.

"Sirrah," replied the Vice-Vizier in truly romantic fashion, "the mission of a Bureau of Information is not to answer questions. Be kind enough to confine your consumption to yon regal repast, as I am quite able to consume all the time at our command. This lady had been a woman — I should say a widow — for several years, and had but one son named Jack."

"That is not very extraordinary," whis-

pered the Chairman. "Out in Michigan widows rarely have more than one son named Jack. In fact, it is a habit Michigan widows have, not to admit more than one Jack into a family."

"Well, I surmise you were the Jack of your family," retorted the Vizier with fine scorn. "But our Jack was no fool, although he preferred a life of elegant ease to one of toil." .

"Exactly like Michigan Jacks," said the fifth commissioner, *sotto voce*, — although he would probably deny the Italian, were he confronted with it.

"Jack regularly spent the widow's income twice over," resumed the narrator, "and, in spite of his mother's constant entreaties, he would not settle down to a life other than that of a frivolous — er — frivolous — other than that of a frivolous —"

"A Frivolous Frivoler," suggested the second commissioner, seeing that the narrator was in search of the proper idiom.



"Thanks," said the Vizier, visibly relieved. "One day Jack went to market, and seeing there a large basket full of richly-colored beans, he inquired of the market-man what they were."

“‘Two fra dime,’ replied the affable butcher.

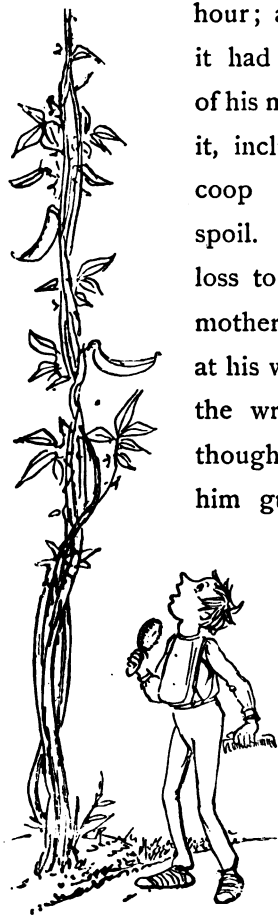
“‘I don’t mean how much are they, but what are they?’ said Jack with some asperity.

“Now the butcher, knowing that Jack’s extravagant nature would not admit of his buying ordinary beans, replied,—

“‘That is a new vegetable; we call it *Faba vulgaris*. It goes mighty well with brown bread;’ and as was expected, Jack was so impressed with the rarity of the article that he purchased the whole stock. When they had been sent home, the lad, not knowing what else to do with them, constructed a bean mine in the rear garden of his mother’s cottage.

“Imagine his surprise, when next morning, after a hard rain, he perceived a *Faba vulgaris* tree shooting upward toward the firmament at the rate of forty miles an





hour; and what was worse, it had taken a large part of his mother's garden with it, including the chicken-coop and pump in the spoil. This meant serious loss to Jack's unfortunate mother, and the lad was at his wit's ends to remedy the wrong of which his thoughtlessness had made him guilty. After much

thought he saw that there was but one thing to do. He could not pull the stalk up — it was up far enough already. His sole chance of regain-

ing possession of his property was to climb to the top of the tree and cut it down before it grew higher; and, being a man of impulse, Jack started."

"Who did you say was king at this time?" asked the Chairman. "Ananias?"

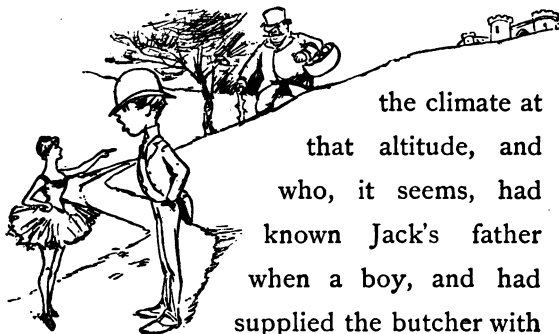
"Alfred, my dear sir," courteously replied the narrator. "Ananias was lying in his grave at this period."

"Ah!" was the response.

"How John managed it I do not pretend to say," said the Vizier, resuming his narrative, "but he got there just the same. A great surprise awaited him, for upon reaching the top of the tree, he discovered there a large stretch of country, which, from the fact that it had a huge granite castle built upon it, Jack knew could not have been carried up by the impetuous plant from his mother's garden. As his mother's representative,

however, the lad entered a claim for the real estate, and proceeded to call upon the owner of the castle, who, he learned, was no less a person than George W. Ogre, Esq., to suggest the propriety of his transferring the title.

“On his way thither he was met by a fairy, who was rather thinly dressed for



the climate at  
that altitude, and  
who, it seems, had  
known Jack's father  
when a boy, and had  
supplied the butcher with  
the highly-colored beans  
in the hope of getting Jack up there to  
call upon her. She intimated to our hero  
that the Ogre was responsible for the  
poverty of his mother and the death of

his father, adding that he was a man of peculiar gastronomic habits, being especially fond of *garçon croquettes à la crème*. Now Jack had always wished himself some one else, but he had no desire to become a part of the Ogre's inner man, and he at once proceeded to abscond; when, much to his terror, he saw the giant coming up the road with a basket of babies under his arm. Blinded by terror, the unfortunate boy rushed into the first house he came to, which happened to be the Ogre's residence, and fell asleep under the dining-room table."

"You don't happen to have a dining-room table handy, do you?" asked one of the commissioners, with difficulty suppressing a yawn.

The sole response was an indignant glance.

"When Jack awoke it was late at night."

He rubbed his eyes hard, and looking up through the open door into the room on the other side of the hall, he perceived that the Ogre was experimenting with a patent hen which could lay any style of egg known to science, and a few other varieties besides, her specialty being hard-boiled nuggets.

“‘That is a valuable bird,’ thought Jack. ‘Indeed, I never saw henything like it before. There is no law against stealing from ogres that I know of, and if the roost is to be robbed at all, I’ve got the right kind of a conscience to do it.’

“‘Lay an egg!’ said the Ogre, addressing the hen, and unconsciously interrupting Jack’s moralizing.

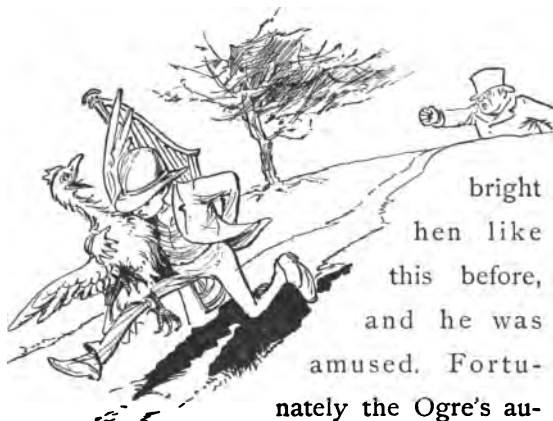
“The hen obeyed.

“‘Lay another!’ said the Ogre.

“‘What’s that?’ asked the hen. ‘If

I've got to lay a thing, I want to know what it is, first. I never saw a nother.'

"Jack with difficulty suppressed a laugh. He had never seen a really



tomatic harp began playing at this moment, and Jack's smothered smile was drowned by a variety of noises, which an etched inscription on the metal back of the harp affirmed was the song, 'What is Home without a Mortgage?' In gratitude for the service thus rendered him

Jack resolved to steal the harp too, if he could; and in order to support his new possessions in proper style, he decided likewise to remove the Ogre's gold.

"Very soon the Ogre fell asleep, and Jack, stealthily walking into the room, grabbed the bags of gold and the hen, the latter in the excitement of the abduction laying a base ball on the floor so loudly that the Ogre started from his couch and asked who was there.

"Jack very impolitely ignored the request for information, but seized the harp and ran for the door. The harp rose to the occasion by playing a double-time gallop, which aroused the Ogre to a realization of the situation, and set the proper pace for Jack to keep a tolerably comfortable distance between him and his pursuer. In a short time he reached the summit of the stalk and hastily climbed down, reach-

ing his mother's garden as the Ogre started to descend in pursuit.

. . . . .  
“Ten minutes later the widow on walking into her back yard discovered the



giant lying dead, with the débris of the beanstalk bestrewing his person.

“‘John,’ she said,—the widow always called her son John when she was angry with him,—‘who killed this gentleman in my yard and ruined the *Faba* tree?’

“‘Mother,’ returned Jack, ‘I can tell a



lie, but I won't. I did it with my little hatchet.'

" 'Come to my arms, my son !' said the happy mother, as the harp struck up, 'Truth is mighty and will prevail ;' while the hen, in honor of the event, laid the foundations for a new cottage; 'I had rather lose all the bean-trees in Massachusetts than have a son who couldn't lie.'

"It was thus," said the Deputy Vice-Vizier, rising from his seat, "that Jack, with the aid of a bushel of beans,—to drop the classics for a moment,—avenged his father, made his mother the parent of a millionaire, and slew the Ogre.

"Now then," he continued, "when you can decide among yourselves what kind of beans those were, then will I tell you whether the gentleman your friend saw became a corpse or a postmaster."

Up to the time of going to press, the five commissioners from the State of Michigan had not decided.



THE DISTINGUISHED DIPLOMAT  
PRESENTS THE APOSTLE OF  
OBSCURITY.



— S there is some *periculum in mora*, I beg that you will permit me to introduce to you very briefly the most misunderstood man of the age. He has no one but himself to blame, for

*Robert B.*

*Rowning he*

*Is too much addicted t' obscuritee.*

— if I may be permitted to quote what I myself might have said in the old Biglow days had I felt called upon to do so.

"A prize will be given to the child who after listening to the wagging of the tale can tell what tale is wagged."

The great yet obscure poet walked slowly to the edge of the platform, and holding his manuscript upside down, slowly delivered the following parleying with the muse: —

HOMO SENEX.

[The footnotes have been kindly supplied by the author of "Sardello at Home, or the Interlinear Browning."]



HE wagging of this  
tale *est talis*,  
It must be read *cum*  
*grano salis*; <sup>1</sup>

A certain man <sup>2</sup> whose  
cognomen I

Am not quite sure that he had any, —

*Hic vir* possessed a calf,

And that 's one half.

Just why I do not know, —

But let that go.

'Tis said he led it *ex cathedra*<sup>3</sup> —

The stalls were simple polyhedra<sup>4</sup> —

And tied it fast, yet somewhat slowly,

Unto the fence for pleasure solely<sup>5</sup> ;

*Fam satis est* — the wall

And calf make all.

Such queer arithmetic

Makes me *sic*.<sup>6</sup>

My poetry is quite confusing

To some ; to me it 's most amusing.<sup>7</sup>

Rhyme can't be parsed.<sup>8</sup> No English Grammar

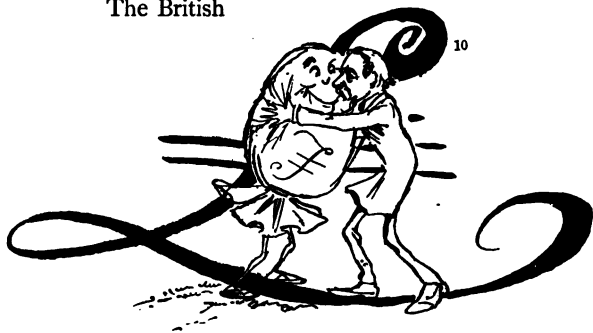
Can break my tropes beneath its hammer.

*On dit, par consequence,*

I can't make sense ;<sup>9</sup>

Nathless I get around

The British



<sup>1</sup> "It must be read *cum grano salis*." The Poet's meaning in this line is evidently that, to catch the bird of thought which is incarcerated in the cage of rhyme, the custom of old-time sportsmen of putting salt on the tail must be observed.

<sup>2</sup> The words following "A certain man" would seem to need elucidation. The poet is undoubtedly caught in a grave self-contradiction. If the hero of the poem were "a certain man," that is, a man about whom there is no uncertainty, the Poet cannot reasonably aver that concerning his cognomen he is "not quite sure." A possible explanation of the difficulty may be found in the dash following the word "any" in the fifth line

of the stanza. This may represent a hiatus, a chasm in the manuscript, as it were, which, had it been filled in, would have made the line as plain as the boundless prairie. It is quite evident that the exigencies of rhyme compelled the Poet to make use of the hiatus ; but the reader cannot but regret that the author did not see fit to employ an additional poetical expedient in the shape of an asterisk and footnote, to denote what it was that the certain man lacked.

<sup>8</sup> This extraordinary use of *ex cathedra* is susceptible to two explanations. If used in its idiomatic sense of ecclesiastical authority, the expression gives some insight into the religious training of the *Homo Senex*. A calf, to be led from the "high seat," must have had some business there in the first place, in which case he was undoubtedly a sacred calf, and therefore looked up to and worshipped by the common herd. It is impossible, however, to reconcile the idea of the old man's ownership with that of a supremely powerful calf, — that is to say, in heathen countries it is impossible. This being so, we are forced, however reluctantly, to give up the notion that the animal was a pillar of the church, and adopt the alternative that the *cathedra* referred to was nothing more than the ordinary milking-stool of farm life. The commentator is well aware that there are grave difficulties in the way of supposing a calf to be led away from a milking-stool ; but

the reader is requested to remember that the commentator is doing the best he can with a very forlorn hope.

<sup>4</sup> To figure to one's self a barn containing stalls which are simple *polyhedra* is a perplexing operation. It would seem natural that a sacred calf should find his dwelling-place in a polyhedronous stall; but we have already effectively disposed of the calf's claims to be regarded as above the ordinary run of heifers; and to find such an one making his home in a "many-seated" barn is surprising. The word "polyhedra," derived from *πολύς* and *ἔδρα*, is more suggestive of the theatre than the barn; yet in this very suggestion of something radically its opposite we find a plausible explanation of the Poet's words. The ancients as well as the moderns have devoted their barns on many occasions to the histrionic needs of strolling players. The term "barn-stormers" is a familiar one among the patrons of the rural stage, and there can be no reasonable doubt that the Poet in the line under discussion touchingly alludes to the days of his youth, when he attended for the first time a dramatic performance in his father's stable, doubtless deadheading his way through the secret flue connecting the humble manger of the family steed with the bins of provender above. Little glimpses like this into the boyhood days of one who is now, one might almost say, a Lar or Penate in every New England home, are surpassingly beautiful,



and cannot be held in too high estimation by the favored reader.

<sup>5</sup> It may be asked, what is "a fence for pleasure solely"? Were the Poet an American boy, we might safely reply that the fence surrounding a base-ball field, chiefly constructed of knot-holes, is a fence for pleasure solely; but as the Poet is not an American, but a Briton of the deepest dye, we must confess that we cannot get over a fence of this description, and must permit the reader to browse through the field of speculation, to surmount the difficulty as to him or her seemeth best.

<sup>6</sup> The Poet's use of the dead languages is very confusing. The word *sic*, employed here, can be construed to mean that the Poet is unwell or "feeling only so-so," to adopt a familiar idiom. Again, it may be that the Poet recognizes that he is addicted to confusion, and attributes his being *sic*, or thus, to the peculiar arithmetic which he finds himself compelled to work into his poem. As a precedent for this use of the word we have the line *Sic semper tyrannis*, which when translated literally means, "Tyrants are always sickly," or, "T was ever thus with tyrants,"—referring to the condition of ill-health in which the original tyrant found himself when confronted with the person who made the remark.

<sup>7</sup> This may be regarded as a much belated admission from the Poet that some of his poetry is ridiculous.

<sup>8</sup> "Parsed" may be a typographical error for passed. Poets frequently write phonetically, and it is quite well known that since the Author was taken up by the cultured few of our Modern Athens, he has adopted the orthoepism there prevalent. "Rhymes can't be passed" is doubtless what the poet meant to write; and we think we here detect a slight rebuke to the Chicago journal which upon a recent occasion rejected one of the Poet's odes, writing him at the same time that his work was very funny, that he showed great promise, and that he only needed to study carefully such works as "Poems of Passion," by Phœbe J. Perkins, of Peoria, Illinois, "Baled Hay," by Bill Nye, and Dr. Watts's Hymns, to fit himself for a brilliant literary future.

<sup>9</sup> This amounts to a confession that the Poet finds American ventures unprofitable, and is a mute appeal for an international copyright law.

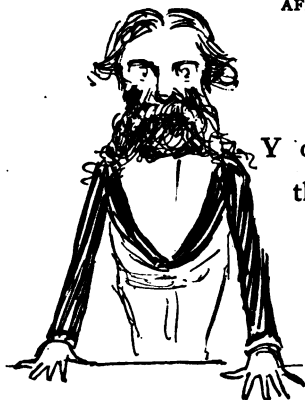
<sup>10</sup> "Nathless I get around the British £" is a line which has greatly puzzled the commentator. The British Sovereign has, up to this writing, shown a distinct preference for another poet, one of whose effusions appears farther along in these pages; and exactly what Mr. Browning can mean by asserting that he gets around her august Majesty is not clear. It savors strongly of a vain and empty boast which is strangely unfamiliar to readers of his previous writings. An additional peculiarity to be noticed is, that the word "Sover-

82 *NEW WAGGINGS OF OLD TALES.*

eign" does not rhyme with anything that has gone before. It is greatly to be regretted that the Poet has seen fit to mar the symmetry of an otherwise exquisite sample of his work by so inartistic — and, we might add, immodest — a climax.

THE  
AFRICAN REMINISCENCER  
TO THE FORE.

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Y dear friends," said the Chairman, "it is too bad that some one better fitted for the task of presenting the Great Eclectic Historian of Africa to you has not been chosen to preside over you this evening. My regret is all the more deep because I find myself unable to make any strikingly apt remarks concerning the gentleman I am about to introduce. I have never read his most celebrated novel, 'Ben She.' I have not even dipped into

'King Sullivan's Mines,' as I believe another well-known and favorably received book is called. You must remember that our African brother is a very recent addition to literature, and having inadvertently started on a perusal of 'The Bostonians' some three years ago, I have been unable to find any time since to devote to other equally valuable and more contemporaneous literary achievements.

"I trust that my friend from the Desert will pardon this humiliating confession, and accept my assurance that just so soon as I can find the opportunity I shall take great pleasure in looking through such of his works as he may see fit to send me. If all I hear of him be true, I certainly concur in the free translation of *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*, which avers that he touched the Nile but to adorn it."

The Reminiscencer was obviously much

embarrassed by this splendid tribute to his genius, for it was only after much persuasion that he could be induced to come forward. Finally his bashfulness was overcome, and rising from his chair he addressed the audience as follows:—

“Ladies and gentlemen, you see me at a great disadvantage this evening. I am called upon to relate to you a fairy story, when I assure you I never heard of such a thing in my life before. Most of my days have been spent fighting Boers in Africa and writing tales in England, and like that of the Distinguished Diplomat here, my reading has necessarily been limited. Up to this point it has not included anything which could be classed as a fairy story.

“However, I will do my best, and will tell you a tale which was related to me by

a Zulu noble who was my valet while I was a member of the British Legation in the Transvaal. If it seem to you to be like anything you have heard before, you will please not attribute it to any plagiaristic intent on my part, but rather to coincidence to which my very minute reading has rendered me extremely susceptible. The story is called



RUMPELSLOPO-  
GAAS.

NCE upon a time  
there lived near  
the forest of Ku-  
kinikaka, in that  
vast district of  
Africa known as Nynngajakh, at the base  
of the snow-capped Mount Kohinoor, a  
poor Masai miller who had one very beau-

tiful daughter. Her complexion was of that rich inky tint which at once betrays African blood; her hair, dressed in the prevailing style of three round woollen balls placed at intervals of three inches, beginning directly above the ear, was a shade darker than her cheek, and at night lent a deeper hue to the pall in which Nature enshrouded the land.

In her own tongue, this beautiful maiden's name was Tzukamatzatatakimeniyoshenelephtha Twala Thumbopa;<sup>1</sup> but by her neighbors and friends she was familiarly known as Her.

This condensation of her baptismal appellation was largely due to the climate in which Her lived, and in which it was considered unsafe to undergo any such pro-

<sup>1</sup> It is very evident that names of this extensive nature were not known in the days when Shakspeare intimated that there was a dearth of matter in an appellation.



tracted effort as the pronunciation of her name involved more than once a century. It is perhaps not generally known that the heat in this part of Africa is sometimes so intense that it warps the judgment of the natives.<sup>1</sup> There is an old tradition still preserved among them that upon one occasion, while a Masai chief was holding friendly converse with his Zulu cousin, the thermometer having reached an altitude of 20,000 feet above the sea-level, there was a sudden sizzle, and 90% of the Masai evaporated and the remaining 10% of bones and hair were shrivelled out of existence. An extraordinary feature of this occurrence was that a gold watch, the bequest of a missionary to the Zulu chief, evaporated at

<sup>1</sup> It opens up an interesting field for speculation, to consider whether this intense heat which can warp the judgment of man is in any way connected with the ideas of civilized beings concerning the temperature which is predicted for the Day of Judgment.

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the same time, and was subsequently discovered in a materialized state in the wigwam of the gentleman who had been so unceremoniously blotted out. Considering these extraordinary climatic conditions, it is not wonderful that anything so frail as Her's name should have succumbed, and that the young lady should consent to a reduction of the tax upon the articulation of her friends.

Her's father was likewise in reduced circumstances. He could hardly earn enough *biltong*<sup>1</sup> to keep himself alive, and Her had

<sup>1</sup> *Biltong* is a species of food much affected by the upper classes of the Congo. It is said by those who have eaten it and lived, to be very similar to English sole-leather, and is supposed by some to consist of such ingredients as gutta-percha, ivory, and lava. A cargo submitted to an expert analytical chemist by a firm interested in its sale in this country discloses the fact that it is harmless and nourishing, and may be left in the hands of the young and the ignorant with impunity. The chemist's opinion cost only \$50, which is remarkable considering the praise he accords to canned biltong, and is likely to inspire confidence in its merits.

to go hungry on many occasions in consequence. The custom of the country which enables millers to grow their own hats on their own heads was a most welcome one to Thumbopa, — for such was the miller called, — and Her's invariable habit of making her own clothing aided materially in keeping expenses down. It is true that when Her wanted a new dress, all she had to do was to smile in a new way, but it was none the less a virtue in the maiden that she took all this upon herself. Many of her friends in no better circumstances could not be persuaded to do it even to save their parents from the debtors' prison.

Having so good a daughter was very naturally a source of great pride to the old miller, — of so great pride, indeed, that he neglected his mill to brag about her accomplishments. Among other ex-

traordinary tales he told, was one which attributed to Her the ability to turn gold into straw, an exaggeration which reached the ears of the Qing<sup>1</sup> and which aroused in his breast a spirit of cupidity; for you must know that straw in Central Africa is a great rarity, and is not infrequently woven into crowns for the local monarchs.

His Majesty, upon hearing of this wonderful accomplishment, sent for Her, and giving her ten nuggets of gold, commanded her to make him two bales of straw before morning, or be sacrificed to a small stucco god which formed the religious element in the royal household.

The command plunged the poor girl into the deepest distress. She had only lived twenty thousand years, and she felt it hard that she should have to die before

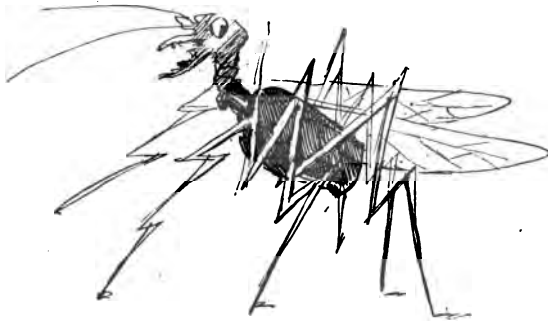
<sup>1</sup> *Qing*. — *Vide* "The Bull Roarer," Custom and Myth, by A. G'Lang.

she had attained the years of discretion.<sup>1</sup> The room given her was on the ground-floor of the palace, — which, after the manner of African palaces, was one story in height counting the cellar, — and was stuffy and hot. In despair Her took off the smile she had worn in the Qing's presence, and threw herself down by the river's brink to think over her past life and bemoan her fate. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and floating along the smooth surface of the silent river were to be seen the African lightning-bugs, which are not very different from the bald eagle of America, and which, when they flap their wings, emit a sound as of a clap of thunder, and flash forth a light which to the ordinary eye is blinding. Altogether it was a beautiful

<sup>1</sup> The election laws among the Masais require a man to be fifteen thousand years old before he votes. Masai women are supposed to reach the years of discretion at twenty-one thousand.

sight,— this silent river with its lightning-bugs.

Suddenly Her was awakened from her reverie by a slight rustling of the bunches of bananas on the tree before her, and be-



fore she had time to decide whether it was the wind or imagination, she was struck in the neck by a round hairy object stuck on the end of a poisoned arrow, and which transpired to be the recently decapitated head of a dog. Her sprang to her feet

with an exclamation of delight, for she knew that to be hit by such an object meant that friends were near. It is one of the pleasing customs of the Masais to revive the courage of their friends in trouble by this means.

Hurriedly seizing a flat piece of wood near by, she scratched the following lines upon it: —

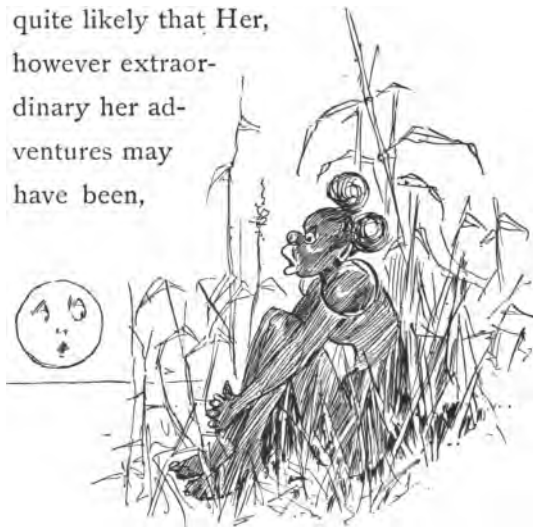
“Old Mother Hubbard  
She went to the cupboard  
To get her poor dog a bone ;  
But when she got there  
The cupboard was bare,  
And so the poor dog got none.”<sup>1</sup>

Whether the lines were original with Her, or whether she jotted them down from memory, I cannot say. She had a habit of writing poetry in moments of intense excitement, and this may have been

<sup>1</sup> Compare this poem with lines in Mother Goose. The similarity is remarkable.

one of those moments for her. To the ordinary woman it would be quite exciting to be struck by the head of a dog at midnight; and it is

quite likely that Her,  
however extraor-  
dinary her ad-  
ventures may  
have been,



possessed all the failings of the ordinary woman. At all events, when she had finished, she read aloud what she had written, and as the last echoes of her rich



voice died away, the withered figure of an old man crept from out the shadows of the banana-tree and stood beside her.

It was a trying moment for the girl. To be thus intruded upon at midnight when all was silent save the low rumbling roar of the lightning-bugs, even by one who bore unmistakable evidences of friendship, was no light matter for Her, especially as the moon disappeared behind a cloud at this moment. She was too terrified to speak. The words which she wished to utter froze on her lips, although the thermometer registered 106° in the shade. The man, on the other hand, seemed to wait for the lady to begin the conversation. Thus they sat until pale Luna's silver light again came forth and bathed the scene in its smiling softness. It was then and then only that Her gave a little shriek of dismay, for as the moon reappeared she

remembered that she was dressed in an exceedingly *negligé* style. But here her self-possession stood her in good stead, for with an easy grace she let herself down the bank into the river until her head alone remained above the water. Then she looked inquiringly at her visitor and motioned to him to be seated on a log a few feet away.

“Good-morrow to you, lass,” said the stranger.

"That all depends on how you look at it," said Her. "I'm afraid it will be a bad one for me."

“Bad, Tzukama—” began the stranger, inquiringly.

“Cut it short,” interrupted Her.

"Thanks," replied the stranger, gratefully.

“Very bad,” sighed the girl; “for Thumbopa, my parent, has informed the

Qing that I can turn gold into straw, and the Qing wants to put his capital into the enterprise, or sacrifice me to Saint Majolica. It is needless to say that the Miller has deviated from the dam of truth and has got me in a hole which I am quite unable to pull in after me. I can throw a rope into the air and climb up it; I can make a biltong short-cake with the next girl; and if a *rhinocodile* should bite the wheel out of the mill I'm the girl to fix it; but as for turning gold into straw I'm not *init*." <sup>1</sup>

"Too bad," said the old man, "but it might be worse. I've got a proposition to make that may help you out."

"Well, please to hurry up and make it, because the crocodiles are biting awfully to-night."

<sup>1</sup> Masai for inability to do something which has gone before.



"If you'll marry me, I'll save you."

"How old are you?"

"Ten thousand and three next February."<sup>1</sup>

"The idea of a boy like you wanting



to marry! It's absurd, and I won't do it, Mr. — er — by the way, I didn't catch your name."

"I know you did n't. I did n't throw it in your direction. However, if you

<sup>1</sup> If the stranger told the truth when he claimed to be ten thousand and three years of age, it would seem as if some official contradiction of Methuselah's claim to be the oldest man ought to be forthcoming. The Antiquarian Society should look into this matter.

won't marry me, will you give me a lock of your hair for a bell-pull when it has grown large enough?"

"I may lose all my hair by that time," pleaded Her. Her hair was one of her strongest points, and she knew it. She also knew that the three knobs on the summit of the cranium were demanded by Zulu



etiquette, and she did not intend to lose her social position if she could help herself. "Besides," she added, "I never deal in futures."

"Very well," returned the old man, rising; "if you don't promise me the knob, you'll be dealing with a very warm future about this time to-morrow. Give me what



I ask, and the art of turning gold into straw is yours. Deny me and —”

“I promise it, I promise it!” cried Her in despair.

“The centre knob?” demanded the stranger.

“Any one you please; but you are cruel — cruel — cru—”

There is no knowing how long Her would have cried “cruel,” had not the tide risen at this moment. The Masai tides are very rapid, and have been known to rise so high in five minutes that the Qing has been compelled to adjourn the meeting of his cabinet to the top limbs of the banana-trees.

The stranger was evidently deeply moved by Her's distress, for he said that if she could guess his name within the next three days he would be willing to withdraw his claim to the lock of hair.

Then, after instructing her as to the manufacture of straw from gold, and saying *Bibi*, which is Zulu patois for *Au revoir*, he disappeared into the night.

Her was greatly relieved when the stranger had taken his departure. As she had said, the crocodiles were unusually vicious that night, and to make matters worse, the tide had risen above the unhappy girl's mouth, so that she could not even thank the stranger for his timely succor.

Of course, now that she knew how, the process of turning gold into straw was comparatively easy work, and when next morning the Qing called to collect his first dividend, he was so pleased with the results of Her's labors, that he asked her to join the list of his Queens<sup>1</sup> as No. 2110, which she deemed it well to do, seeing

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<sup>1</sup> *Queen*, n.: The consort of the Qing. — *The Masai Dictionary, Unabridged*.

that his Majesty left her the alternative of being fed to the elephants.

On the evening of the second day after her marriage, while the Qing was out courting a young Zulu maiden who was said to be able to make a very superior paste out of diamonds, and whom he hoped to make Mrs. Qing No. 2111, Her's mysterious benefactor called at the palace to see if the Queen knew who he was, and to gloat over her misery.

Her, in the mean time, had had all the baptismal records of the continent since the Deluge ransacked for names; an expedition had been despatched through the subterranean passage to the Rose of Fire, near Milosis, to get such names as the tourists who had passed through had left there; the names and business addresses of all the Americans who have left their mark on the pyramids and obe-



lisks of Egypt were written down in five large volumes; three English explorers, who knew the way, had been sent to take a census of the Mining District around Kekuanaland; and the Transvaal Circulating Library had been ordered to send her Majesty a complete, though cheap, set of the works of Mr. Allan Quatermain, the names of whose characters were supposed to be as unique as anything in fiction. Having digested all these compilations, Her felt as well up on names, Christian and savage, proper and improper, as if she had been the index to the Records which in Presbyterian circles are supposed to exist in the realms beyond.

"Ask the gentleman to *trek*<sup>1</sup> into the parlor," she said to the slave who announced the visitor. Then, fixing her

<sup>1</sup> *Trek*, i. e. to tramp. It is interesting to observe that African vagrants are known as *treks*.

hair coquettishly, so as to make her triumph over her visitor all the harder for him to bear, and singing, "I've got Him on the List," she descended into the parlor by means of an aerial ladder, the invention of an



African juggler, which leaned against itself, and hung suspended in the air three feet from the floor, so as not to injure the carpet, without making any display of

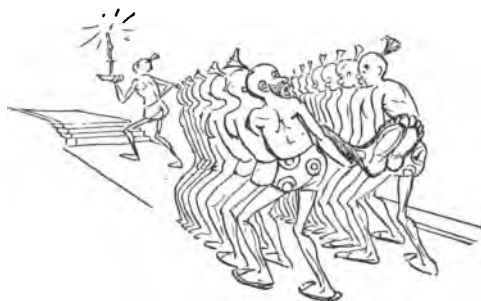
its suspenders. With an expression of triumphant joy Her greeted her guest by every name she could think of, — from Umbopa down to Ruskin, — to every one of which, to her intense dismay, he denied all claim.

When she had reached the end of her list, and he still remained a stranger in a foreign land, Her swooned away. For the first time in her life she looked above ten thousand years old. The stranger, with a heartless smirk, toyed gently with the knob on which his heart was set, and saying, "To-morrow noon will I return for thee," left the palace. The slaves carried the unhappy woman to her chamber and put her to bed.

All night long she tossed and moaned, so much so that the Qing notified her that if she tossed and moaned any more she would be used for bait at the crocodile

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hunt the following week. This gentle remonstrance had a quieting effect upon the unhappy Queen; but her heart was heavy, and the tears coursed down her cheeks, when she thought of the social



degradation to which she was doomed; for with a single lock gone, like Samson<sup>1</sup> she lost her power.

Slowly passed the night. Dawn (to be had of all booksellers) came at last, but with no relief for Her. At noon the thun-

<sup>1</sup> I got this idea of Samson out of a book called the "Bible," published in London, 1884. — H. R. H.

derbolt must fall. No breakfast could she eat, and as a crowning misery, her hitherto loving spouse asked her if she had not made some mistake in the marriage license when she said she was born in 18200 B. C.,—she looked every hour of twenty-four thousand.

After the mockery of the morning meal she seated herself at the window to watch for the coming of her persecutor. Her temples throbbed, and she nervously fingered the hour-glass, which ever and anon she would turn, and with a piece of chalk keeping tally of the hours upon the back of a slate-colored slave at her side.

As the last sand preceding mid-day passed into the lower half of the glass, she perceived the caricature of humanity who had first helped and was now endeavoring to destroy her walking toward

the palace. He was evidently very absent-minded, for he wore an old silk hat, which he had purchased at the Cape, around his left ankle instead of as a bustle, which is the accepted use of the beaver in Masai circles. He was not so absent-minded, however, but that the lock of the Queen's hair was still the goal of his ambition. He approached slowly, and after some parley with the Kaffir at the gate he entered the palace. A few moments later there was a noise on the ladder without, and the Kaffir, sticking his head up through the floor, called out,—

“A gent as wishes for to see Queen 2110 is below. He says his name is Rumpel-slopogaas.”

“His name is what?” cried the Queen in astonishment, and with a little hope springing up in her breast.

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"Rumpelslopogaas," was the reply.

. . . . .

As before, Her dressed her hair with unusual care, and arranged her smile as became her queenly station. As before, she descended the aerial ladder to the audience chamber. There was that in her eyes which boded ill for her guest as she strode past him and, mounting the throne, haughtily inquired: "Well, Rumpelslopogaas, what do you want?"

The little man nearly fainted with terror and surprise: she had the name.

"Rumpelwhatdyersay?" he screeched.

"Slopogaas, Rumpel," said the Queen, airily.

"Spell it!" cried the visitor, beside himself with rage.

"That's not in the contract Saas, old man," retorted the Queen with dignity, as she touched an electric button on the

arm of the throne, and so shocked her guest that he forever after eschewed her acquaintance.

"Good-by, Rumpel," she cried after him as he hobbled away, tears of rage and

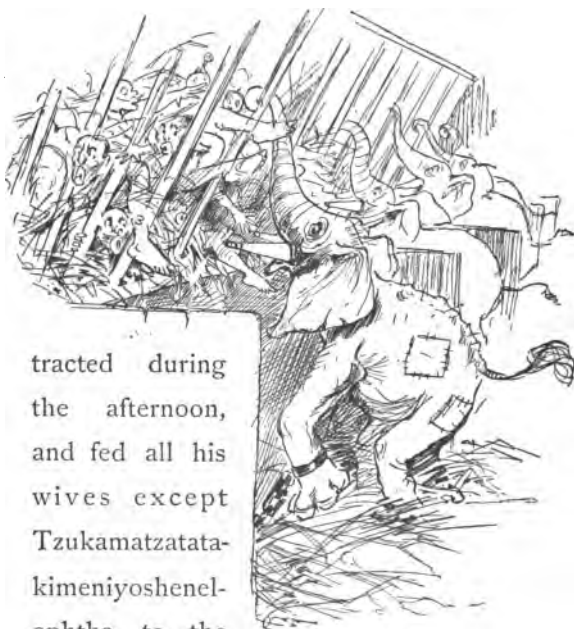


mortification streaming down his withered cheek. "Next time you come, bring what you call your mind with you, and don't send up your name."

And the Queen kissed her husband so sweetly when he returned home from the



missionary hunt that evening, that he broke off the ten engagements he had con-



tracted during the afternoon, and fed all his wives except Tzukamatzatata-kimeniyoshenel-ephtha to the elephants, and the two lived happily ever after.

THE DISTINGUISHED DIPLOMAT

WAXETH ELOQUENT.



OW, my dear children," said the Distinguished Diplomat, "I want you to pay the greatest attention to what is to follow.

My good friend who is about to address you is a very great singer; not, I beg you to believe, in the sense that a *prima donna* is a great singer, for no letter in a known alphabet could be set as a limit to the height of his notes—and I may parenthetically remark, by way of encouragement to such young poets as may be in this audience, that he has frequently soared as

high as a five-pound note while in the service of my good friend the Empress of India. For many years he sang the praises of his noble land,—a land which will always be a *terra firma* in the affections of your humble servant,—a land whose greatness is largely due to the good fortune it had *laudari a viro laudato*, and who has since been made a Laud on account of it.

“During my ministry at the Court of St. James, I remember seeing him oftentimes sitting in the Poet’s corner writing verses at the command of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. Always ready, *nunquam non paratus*, whatever his subject; a living paradox, Baron yet fertile, Lord yet subject, Peer yet Poet, in the seedtime yet budding still, we shall now have the pleasure of listening to the pearls of poesie as they drop from the

lips of this great Oyster of song, — if my noble friend will pardon my carrying the metaphor to its logical conclusion."

After a salvo of applause the Poet-Peer wrapped his robes about him, removed the coronet from his brow, and with a majestic tread walked to the footlights and sonorously delivered the following lines: —

## CINDERELLA.



HILDREN, leave  
me here a little ;  
I, who am no  
longer young,  
Find it difficult  
to put my mus-  
ings in a mod-  
ern tongue.

'T is some threescore years since first I twanged  
the harp in Locksley Hall,  
And it's fortunate for you, dears, that I get around  
at all.

I am not so good of hearing, and my eyes are  
not so sharp  
As they were when England echoed every tinkle  
of my harp.

But my voice is still the voice that once evoked  
a poet's fame,  
And if I'm a trifle senile I shall get there just  
the same.

Time has streaked with silver whiteness all my  
wealth of raven hair ;  
Time is money, — specie payment, — and it finds  
resumption there.

Yet for every hair of silver, in my heart there is a  
rhyme,  
And I 'll string a few together if you 'll only give  
me time.

I will loop them all together, I will string them in  
a chain  
For a garland, little children ; listen well and  
I 'll explain, —

Listen well unto the story which the Laureate  
shall sing,  
Full of love as is the trysting of two bluebirds in  
the Spring.

In the Spring a little madder tints the temper of  
the rose ;  
In the Spring a young man's fondness is for  
anything but prose ;

In the Spring a maiden's bonnet shows the iris  
of the wren ;  
In the Spring the budding poet is addicted to  
the pen.

So I, too, in life's sweet springtime, when the  
Idyls all were done,  
Wrote this fairy-tale so famous, just for exercise  
and fun.

Then her cheek was round and rosy as should  
be in any case,  
And her conversation seemed to me the height  
of verbal grace.



And I said, "My Cinderella, on the rosary of truth,  
Backward tell the beads,  
that I may learn the story of your youth."

On her cheek the blushes  
hinted of the rose's  
pinky leaf,  
In her eye the moisture  
gathered in the storm-  
cloud of her grief;

And she turned northeast  
by north, and in a  
most dramatic style

Struck the keynote of her sorrow and the sun-  
shine of her smile,

Saying, "I have laved the linen for a family of  
three ;"

Saying, "That was long ago, but now they get  
no more of me."

Here she took a glass of water in her jewel-  
fingered fist ;  
Every second as she swallowed irrevocably was  
missed.

Then, refreshed, proceeded slowly, and with very  
great detail,  
To repeat the little story of the slipper small and  
frail.

You 'll excuse me if I tell it in my own peculiar  
way,  
For her grammar had the errors of the grammars  
of her day.

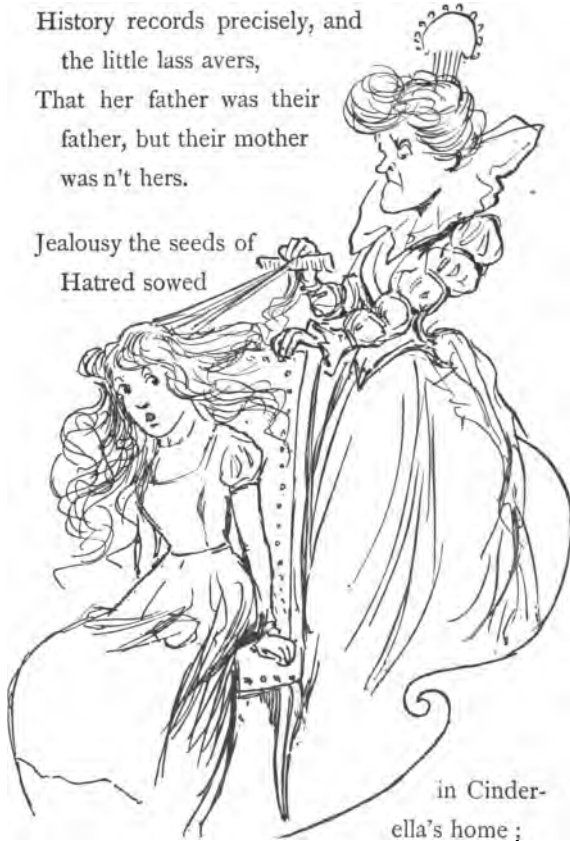
Now I think as all the points of the defence are  
handed in,  
It is time that I the counsel for the plaintiff should  
begin.

Cinderella had two sisters, — the relationship  
was such  
That they weren't disposed to congregate to-  
gether very much.



History records precisely, and  
the little lass avers,  
That her father was their  
father, but their mother  
was n't hers.

Jealousy the seeds of  
Hatred sowed



in Cinder-  
ella's home ;

When her sisters brushed her hair they never  
failed to yank the comb.

Cinderella's beauty brought her bitter blossom-  
ings of Hate,  
And her goings were restricted by the kitchen  
and the gate.

She was slave to their siestas when the dinner  
hour was o'er ;  
She must wash the china dishes, she must scrub  
the kitchen floor ;

She must shovel coal, and Monday do the wash-  
ing in the morn ;  
She must wear a constant smile that shall but  
sharpen up their scorn ;

She must sleep up in the garret, say her prayers  
a prey to rats,  
And avoid a chance of comfort on a bedstead  
minus slats.

They would call her naughty names and do their  
best to make her say  
Something wrong to give their mother's muscle  
exercise that day.

But her feelings, *lignum-vitæ*, though they suffered, she controlled,  
And the silver of their speeches she returned with  
silence, gold.

Now it chanced a handsome Prince had sent  
some invitations out  
For a german, which excited all the neighborhood  
about.

To this ball the hateful sisters of dear Cinderella  
went,  
Happy in their miser hearts, and in her pain and  
discontent.

And they taunted her when going, saying, "Don't  
you wish that you  
Were a lady like your sisters, and with them were  
going too?"

"Mock me not," quoth Cinderella; "life has  
other joys for me.  
I shall keep myself from mischief darning stockings after tea."

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Scarcely had their figures vanished ere beside the chimney-breast

Came the sound as of a  
breathless and a much-  
belated guest ;

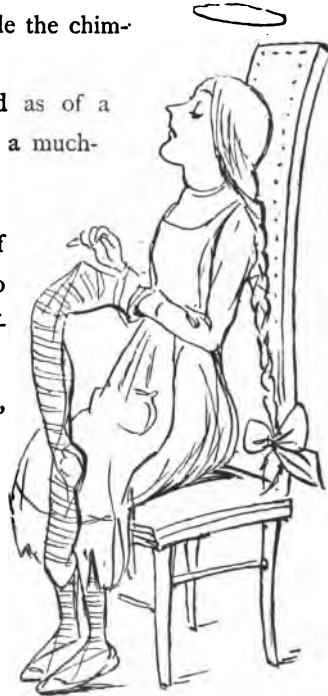
And a voice of  
strange falsetto  
smote the unof-  
fending air ;

And it murmured,  
“Cinderella,  
Cinderella, are  
you there?”

So excited was  
the maiden in  
her dark, de-  
serted home,

That she spoke before she knew it, and articulated, “Gnome !”

“It is I, the same,” the stranger said, assuming  
mortal guise,



"Tis thy god-  
greatest standing  
thine eyes.

mother thou  
here before

"Hist thee,  
Know ye  
the hour  
Hie thee

Cinderella !  
that 't is now  
of nine ;  
straight into the  
garden, — snatch  
a pumpkin off the  
vine."



With her wondrous  
wand the stranger  
touched the  
sympathetic gourd :  
Lo ! it changed into  
a carriage like aris-  
tocrats afford.

"Hist thee, Cinderella ! Hither bring the mouse-  
trap and the mice,  
And the latter shall be neatly metamorphosed in  
a trice."

With her wondrous wand the stranger touched  
the left, anon the right ;  
Lo ! they changed into four horses, — two of  
black and two of white.

“Hist thee, Cinderella ! Hie thee to the garret  
dark and dim ;  
Fetch me here a roving rodent, for I have a  
need of him !”



With her wondrous wand she touched him, saying  
something very weird :  
Lo ! he changed into a coachman-with a uniform  
and beard.

Then to Cinderella spake she in a language quaint  
and queer :

Lo ! she found herself in satins, with a diamond  
in each ear.

In a wink her graceful figure was arrayed in fine  
brocade,

And she noticed  
that the boxes all  
were C. O. D.,  
and paid.

But of all the trinkets  
pretty which so  
pleased the little  
lass



Was a pair of dainty slippers numbered one and  
made of glass.

“Hist thee, Cinderella ! Drive ye to the palace  
of the King,

But be sure that you  
're at home before  
the midnight hour  
shall ring."



Then the Gnome went up the chimney whence  
she came a moment since,  
And dear Cinderella hastened to the german and  
the Prince.



All the noble lords and ladies paused and  
courtesied to her  
As she swept the polished marbles, where her  
scornful sisters were.



And the Prince her "Dancing Order" quite  
monopolized, and she  
Was the picture of his fancy, it was plain enough  
to see.

And he pledged her in the rarest and the most  
expensive wines,  
Till his eyes were traitors to him, and all zigzag  
were his lines.



So she triumphed at the german over all the  
guests, until  
It was rumored that her sisters found the evening  
very chill.

Yet I doubt not through the ages one pervading  
purpose runs,  
And the eyes of girls are dazzled by the brilliance  
of the sons.

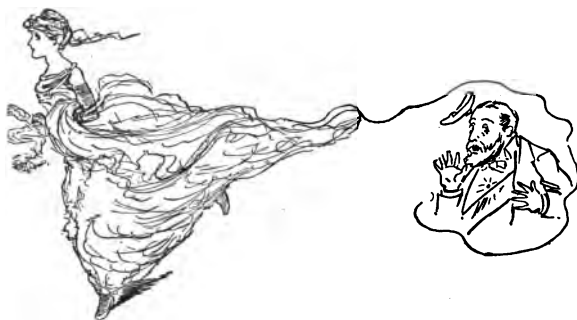
Oh, the evening was so pleasant, and the ices were  
so good,  
It was hard for her to leave them as she prom-  
ised that she would.

So she tarried, and the Prince began his pastoral  
of love,  
And she quite forgot the midnight till the clock  
struck quarter of.

Up she jumped, and from the palace in a storm  
of girlish fear  
Scorned decorum, rushing onward like a hunted,  
frightened deer.

And she never slacked her speed until she reached  
the house, and there  
When she added up her slippers found she had  
but half a pair.

Sleep for her was very broken. Things for her  
were in a fix ;  
And a worried conscience called her in the morn-  
ing long ere six.



Hark ! the King's policemen shouting in the mid-  
dle of the street ;  
They are crying, " Cinderella, what 's the measure  
of your feet ? "

They had tried to fit that slipper for a dreary,  
dreary while,  
And the feet that they had measured were enough  
to make a mile.

But when Cinderella took it and with great assurance put  
The extraordinary slipper on her pretty little foot,

They exclaimed, "Behold a Princess!" for the Prince had made an oath  
That this slipper was so precious he was bound to have them both.

"And the lady who can wear them," quoth the Prince, "upon my life,  
I will marry ere the sundown, and to-day shall be my wife."

So the Prince and Cinderella wedded on the sixth of May,  
And lived happily together, so the scornful sisters say.

And the sisters begged her pardon, and she did the handsome thing,  
And secured for them positions as domestics for the King.

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Howsoever these things be, a long farewell, fare-  
well to all ;

Sixty years is quite an absence, — I must on to  
Locksley Hall.

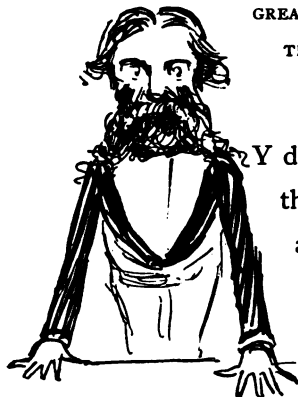
Comes a look within your faces like a diamond in  
the rough,  
And it leads me to imagine that you all have had  
enough.

So I bid you all good-evening, — and it has been  
good, I know ;  
Time is growing quite impatient, roaring me-ward,  
and I go.



THE  
GREAT ROMANCER IS FIT-  
TINGLY INTRODUCED.

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“Y dear children,” said  
the Chairman, “you  
all know that ex-  
quisite line from a  
literature which,  
though written  
in a language  
long called dead, is yet undying, — *Finis  
coronat opus.*

“Wisely has the Great Romancer *qui  
exegit monumentum aere perennius* been  
asked to preside over the end which  
crowns the work ; and the distinguished  
gentleman who sat at the other end must

not think that I am making invidious comparisons, or saying aught to hurt his feelings, when I assert that it is at this end that the coronation takes place. He said an infinitely harder thing of himself when he told the world that all the stories have been told, apparently forgetting that he still remained to idealize the real for us, while the Great Romancer, whom we are now to hear, had just begun to realize the ideal.

"My romantic friend will superintend the oscillation of the narrative of Beauty and the Beast, — a story which from the days of my youth I have regarded as *facile princeps* in fairy literature. It is a story which —" here the Distinguished Diplomat became embarrassed. He had lost the manuscripts pertaining to the whichness of the story; and after a moment's hesitation he cleared his throat and

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added, "But I trespass on your time, and taking a hint from the immortal Spanish bard, who sang

Hablen cartas  
y callen barbas, —

'Let writings speak, and beards be silent,'  
— I will ask our modern Pacha of many tales to lead us into the twilight that surrounds the borderland of old Romance."

The readings were then brought to a close by the Great Romancer, whose manuscript ran as follows: —

THE STRANGE CASE OF BEAUTY AND  
THE BEAST.

## I.

## THE INCIDENT OF THE ROSE.



R. TUTTERSON the merchant was a man of a rugged countenance that was never lighted by a smile, unfortunate in business, lengthy, lank, and yet lovable as the possessor of a

beautiful daughter. When everything went well with him, there was something about him that inspired confidence which even his fondness for himself could not overcome; but when angry, Mr. Tutterson,

without making any perceptible effort, could be as mad as the next man.

The chief pleasure which Mr. Tutterson derived from life, independent of the olive branch which adorned his household, came from a habit of rambling through the streets on Sunday afternoons, plucking flowers from the miniature parks, and wishing he knew of some island wherein there lay hidden the fabulous treasures of long-forgotten pirates.

It chanced in one of his Sunday afternoon rambles that his way led him down a by-street in an almost uninhabited quarter of London. The street was small, and on either side were the gardens of the occupants of the one or two villas which had been erected in the neighborhood. Within the largest of these gardens Mr. Tutterson perceived a bush on which were growing several magnificent specimens of

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the cabbage-rose. Beyond the bush was a sinister-looking house in whose windows the shades were pulled tightly down. Mr. Tutterson did not perceive that beneath one of the shades there peered a pair of the most malignant-looking eyes conceivable. Had he done so, he never would have ventured to open the gate stealthily and walk on tiptoe to where the roses were growing.

He was a prudent man, was Mr. Tutterson, and he would much rather have gone to a florist and purchased the flowers which he had promised to take to his daughter, than purloin the blossoms of others when their owner was around to see him do it.

It was growing dark rapidly as Mr. Tutterson drew near the bush. It may have been for this reason that he did not see the knob of the grim-looking door

turn slowly as he reached out to pick the largest flower from its stem. In another instant the rose was picked, and Mr. Tutterson became dimly conscious that he had been struck by an avalanche or some such overwhelming mass. As he said when in after years he related the occurrence to his grandchildren, he felt as if the sinister-looking mansion before him had fallen upon him. Always direct in his speech, he cried out, "Help! Help!"

Then to his terror he saw before him a form so utterly horrible and depraved in appearance as to surpass belief. It was not the house that had fallen upon Mr. Tutterson; it was the genius of the house, the owner of the roses, and the essentially sinful-looking being which he saw before him that had dropped into his life, whence he knew not.

Again Mr. Tutterson cried, "Help!"

"Help!" retorted the fiendish proprietor with a satanic smile. "What do you want help for? Seems to me you're able to help yourself!" pointing to the rose which



Mr. Tutterson still held in his nerveless grasp.

"What's the good of falling on a man from the third-story window of a sinister-looking building just because of a cabbage-rose!" asked Mr. Tutterson, rubbing the back of his neck.

"I did n't fall from the third-story

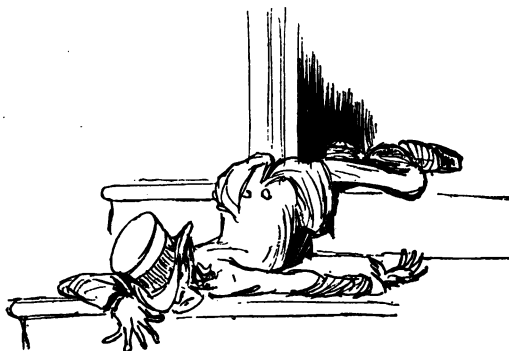
window; I jumped from the roof of the veranda. It is a regular Sunday afternoon pastime of mine, and if you were in the way it was your own fault. I did n't ask you to cabbage my roses."

"Let me go!" cried Mr. Tutterson, angrily.

"I will not only let you go, but I will assist you in the movement," retorted the Beast; for that the fiend was a beast Mr. Tutterson was convinced. True to his word was Mr. Tutterson's new acquaintance; and when next the merchant had recovered his scattered faculties, he was on the other side of the street, while about him played the shadows of the sinister-looking building with the drawn blinds, bent but not broken, the cabbage-rose that he had plucked still adorning his buttonhole, where he had placed it during his parley with the Beast.



As for the latter, he had disappeared.



## II.

### MR. TUTTERSON'S DECISION.

THAT evening Mr. Tutterson came home in sombre spirits, and ate his dinner without seating himself at table. It was his custom of a Sunday, when this meal was over, to sit by the fire until twelve, and



then go soberly and gratefully to bed. On this night, however, he felt as if he had had all the fire he could stand for one day, and could not find it compatible with the remedies he took to ameliorate his sufferings, to go to bed quite so soberly as usual. Before retiring he called his daughter to him and related the incident of the rose to her, taking the flower from his buttonhole and twirling it nervously while he spoke.

Beauty — as Mr. Tutterson called his daughter — was very indignant at the treatment her father had received, and wished to take the rose back, “before another hour had rung out from the minster on the hill.” Of this, Mr. Tutterson would not hear, saying that he would send the Beast a check for ten shillings the next morning to pay for the rose, and would then sue him for ten pounds’ damages to

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his feelings as soon as he could get around again.

Mr. Tutterson then wearily sought his couch, and, as befitted his tired state, slept soundly until long after the birds began their morning carol in the trees.

The next morning, in accordance with a settled plan, Beauty set off to carry the ten shillings to the Beast, and to serve a summons of complaint upon him for assault and battery.

### III.

#### THE TUTTERSON ELOPEMENT.

AFTER his daughter had gone out, Mr. Tutterson lay wearily down upon his bed and nursed his wounded vanity and his wrath. Never before had he been so treated. How disproportionate to the value of the rose was the chastisement

he had received at the hands of the Beast! Was ten pounds sufficient compensation for the loss of self-respect to which being thrown bodily across the public highway subjected a man, to say nothing of the assaulting and battering he had received before he crossed the highway?

From his soul Mr. Tutterson wished he had instituted suit for £20.

"If I could collect a shilling on each pound I received from that depraved inhabitant of the sinister-looking building, I'd get £40," he whispered sadly to his dog which lay whining at his side.

Musing thus, Mr. Tutterson sat until the luncheon-hour, when his appetite warned him of the flight of time. His daughter had not returned, and Mr. Tutterson began to grow anxious.

"The Beast surely would not treat a lady as he treated me," he thought; "still,

a Beast who would treat any one as he treated me on such short acquaintance would do anything!"

As the morning went, so passed the afternoon; still, Beauty did not return.

The shadows of night crept across the threshold, and Mr. Tutterson began to lose his temper. He was growing very hungry, and as his daughter combined with her beauties of person the duties of cook, Mr. Tutterson did not see exactly where his evening meal was coming from.

The moaning cry of the newsboy could be heard far down the street, but save this all was silent. Alone the merchant sat, starting nervously betimes when he thought he heard a footstep upon the porch. The ticking of the clock upon the mantel grew momentarily more pronounced, and every swing of the pendu-

lum but added to the dyspeptic overflow which was gradually welling up in Mr. Tutterson's breast. Instead of "tick-tock, tick-tock," it seemed to say, "Tut-terson, Tut-terson, what have you done, what have you done?" until the lonely man was in a condition of mind bordering on insanity.

Fortunately for the clock, — for Mr. Tutterson had reached for his boot to throw at the dial, — as the hour-hand pointed to half after six, and the minute-hand was loitering in the neighborhood of a quarter to seven, there came a loud knock at the front door.

The sick man started, and craning his neck until his Adam's apple seemed like the apex to a pyramid, he gazed into the darkness of the hall-way as if afraid to believe in the reality of the sound. He tried to cry out, "Who's there?" but the

apple stood in his way and he simply gurgled.

Again the knock came, and following it was a scarcely muffled curse against the sinfulness of people who keep messenger-boys standing out in the rain; for it



was raining hard without.

"Come in," cried Mr. Tutterson.

"The door is bolted," cried the messenger, for it was he.

The word "bolted" filled Mr. Tutterson with blank dismay. Not only did it account for his dyspepsia, but it was a possible explanation of Beauty's absence.

Forgetting his pain, Mr. Tutterson sprang to the door and opened it. The messenger thrust into his hand a small envelope, the inscription so blurred that Mr. Tutterson hardly recognized himself as the person addressed. With a white face the merchant broke the seal. The letter read:—

SEPTEMBER 1.

MY DEAR FATHER,—I called at the Beast's this morning, and found him so exceedingly handsome and agreeable that I decided to become Mrs. Beast. It was a great deal cheaper, dear father, than paying ten shillings for a paltry rose, and lawsuits for damages are quite as damaging to the damagee as to the damagor. When Mr. B. and I return from our wedding

tour, we will give ourselves the pleasure of calling upon you.

Your affectionate daughter,

BEAUTY TUTTERSON BEAST.

P. S. There is some cold chicken in the kitchen closet, *dear* father.

B. T. B.

If the messenger had chosen to look back at the door he had just left, he would have seen an old man lying prone upon the porch, with a damp, crumpled note clasped tightly in his left hand.

Mr. Tutterson had fainted from hunger.

#### IV.

##### THE SEARCH FOR THE BEAST.

THERE is no knowing how long Mr. Tutterson would have remained in a swoon, had not a leak in the piazza roof



caused the water to drop on his wan, white face. The leak revived him.

Starting to his feet, he rushed madly into the house, threw open the pantry door, clutched the deli-

cate viands which Beauty's postscript told him were there, and ravenously consumed them.

His pangs of hunger satisfied, Mr. Tutterson gained new strength. He resolved to seek out his

daughter and rescue her, for he had fully made up his mind that the letter had been written under restraint. The first



part of Beauty's letter, it seemed to Mr. Tutterson, was lacking in the exuberant affection which the inedited letters of daughters usually betray, and there were no italics; and Mr. Tutterson was sufficiently familiar with the literary habits of womankind to know that, had the letter been spontaneous, so glaring an omission would have been impossible. On the other hand, the sorrowing parent thought the postscript showed that the thoughtfulness which had ever characterized Beauty's relations with her father still remained; and the next to the last word was italicised. Mr. Tutterson's theory, based upon a comparison of the body of the letter with the postscript, was that the first part had been dictated to the unhappy girl by her abductor, while the postscript was influenced by the dictates of her own heart; and the lonely father

thought he could read between the lines a mute appeal to him to come to his daughter's assistance at once.

With Mr. Tutterson, to resolve was to do. It took him but three minutes to fortify himself for the approaching struggle, and armed with his family umbrella he set forth. In a very brief space of time he arrived before the sinister-looking mansion. It was a great relief to Mr. Tutterson to find it still there, although now that he stood before it and observed by the street-lamp's dim light that the window-shades were still pulled tightly down, his anxiety to penetrate within its doors abated considerably.

"To go or not to go, that is the question," said Mr. Tutterson, whose familiarity with Shakspeare enabled him to adapt the phrases of the great dramatist to any occasion. "I would n't hesitate a moment

if these pavements were a little softer," he added reminiscently.

Then the possibility that his daughter was suffering flashed across his mind, and he hesitated no longer. He unlatched the gate, and with a bold front marched up the garden walk. This time he scanned every nook and corner of the house as if dreading to discover the malignant eye of the Beast. His heart beating wildly, he rang the bell, whose sound had barely died away before the door was opened, and the Beast, holding a rattan stick in his hand, stood before him.

Mr. Tutterson gulped convulsively. A second view of the repulsive creature confronting him convinced him that Beauty had become Mrs. Beast against her own free will.

"Marry that creature from choice? Pshaw! the idea is absurd," thought Mr. Tutterson.

"Well?" said the Beast, impatiently.

"Not quite," returned Mr. Tutterson. "But somewhat better, thank you," he added politely. It was just as well, he thought, to be diplomatic.

"No repartee, if you please," retorted the Beast, angrily. "I don't care for tea in any shape — much less repartee. What are you doing on my stoop?"

"I seek my daughter," replied the merchant with dignity.

"Well, you're doing your seeking in the wrong neighborhood. If she is where she daughter be, she's at home, and I'll allow you four seconds to start in that direction yourself. I thought I gave you to understand the other day that there was no room for your kind around here?"

"You certainly gave me that among other more or less painful impressions," cried Mr. Tutterson; "but a father's place

is by his daughter's side, and I intend to get there if I die for it. Restore her to me or take the consequences. I'll have you up for incendiarism, or whatever the crime is."

"Oh, you will, eh?" retorted the Beast, getting red in the face and swishing the rattan through the air. "Well, if it is incendiarism to fire a man off my premises, incendiarism is just the crime I am about to stain my soul with. Come!"

And then Mr. Tutterson repeated his gymnastic feat of the Sunday afternoon previous. The door of the sinister-looking mansion slammed to; the Beast disappeared, swallowed up in the blackness of his retreat, and Beauty still remained a prisoner.

"Heavens!" roared Mr. Tutterson, the analogy being suggested by the extreme prevalence of stars in his neighborhood.

"To think that Beauty *could* bring herself to marry that wretch, and say that he is lovely, amiable, and handsome, even if her refusal imperilled her life! However," he added, as if the thought comforted him, "if she is like her grandmother on her mother's side, perhaps she 'll tame him."

With these remarks Mr. Tuttersson dragged himself slowly and painfully home.

## V.

### MR. TUTTERSON MAKES A DISCOVERY.

AS he drew near his own house Mr. Tuttersson was surprised to see a light burning in his parlor. He had left no one in the house, and the unexpected illumination filled his soul with alarm. "Who can it be?" he asked himself over

and over again. Burglars would surely not rob his house, for they had entered it so often before to find nothing, that Mr. Tutterson could have slept with his doors and windows open, and never have been troubled except by an occasional tramp who wished for a place to sleep.

His physical condition precluded his contending with the invaders of his household alone and unaided; so before entering his hall he called to him one of his neighbors, a stout, well-built fellow, who, Mr. Tutterson thought, could stand up before even the Beast without serious damage to his personality. To his neighbor Mr. Tutterson confided his fears, and the two men walked into the house together prepared to wreak vengeance on the intruders. As they entered, a few chords were struck on the piano in the merchant's parlor, and much to the old man's delight



the voice of his beloved daughter was raised in a song dear to his memory.

"She has escaped, thank Heaven!" cried the merchant, with tears of joy running down his cheeks. "Beauty, here is papa!" he added, throwing open the parlor door.

"Why, where have you been?" asked Beauty, as if her father's absence was the one thing in the world that needed explanation. "We have been quite worried about you."

At the word *we*, Mr. Tutterson looked faint.

"We?" he asked. "Who is we?"

"Why, Mr. Beast and I. We took a wedding tour down to the British Museum, and then came right home."

"Is that man in my house?" asked the father, sternly.

"Yes, father, and I know you will like him, he is *so* handsome and kind."

"Handsome and kind!" shrieked Mr. Tutterson, rising and getting behind his neighbor. "Handsome may be in the use of his hands, and kind of a certain kind, but not my kind. Why, he's homely enough to stop a train!"

"You do him wrong, dear papa. Charlie would n't stop a train, I know," returned the simple girl. "Just wait till you see him; he's upstairs now, putting on a clean collar."

"Oh, indeed! Well, perhaps *my* turn has come, we will proceed to see my charming, kind, amiable son-in-law, who has hitherto amused himself by propelling his father-in-law across the street. Perhaps the collaring we give him won't suit his style of neck. If you happen to hear a dull thud in the back yard, don't get excited; and to-morrow you may buy yourself a crêpe veil and other emblems of

mourning. The funeral will be from his late residence. Come along, neighbor; I have work for you above."

With these words Mr. Tutterson seized his neighbor by the arm, and pushing him before him rushed up stairs. Beauty remained below, fearing to witness the tragedy which she fully expected would now ensue. The irate Mr. Tutterson, with more noise and bravery than was usual with him, rushed from room to room in search of his prey, until at last, standing before a looking-glass adjusting his tie, he found him. A cry of amazement was all that Beauty, waiting tearfully in the parlor, could hear; then she heard her father's voice calling to her to come upstairs. Like a dutiful daughter she obeyed, and on entering the room she perceived the merchant seated on the bed, his mouth wide open, while before him stood a hand-

some, graceful young man who looked rather sheepish and nervous.

"Beauty," said Mr. Tutterson, "who is this, I'd like to know?"



"My husband, papa dear," replied Beauty with a bright smile.

"Are you Mr. Beast?" demanded Mr. Tutterson of the blushing youth.

"Th-th-that's my n-n-name, sir."

"Do you live in a sinister-looking mansion on the Duke of Westminster Lane, S. W., London?"

"A house with the window-shades pulled tightly down?" queried the youth.

"The same," ejaculated Mr. Tutterson.

"That's my residence, dear father-in-law," was the simpering response.

"Well, what Dr. Jekyll business have we struck, anyhow? This afternoon you were a roaring, red-eyed, snub-nosed, shock-headed dwarf, with a temper like a bull and a fist like a battering-ram; and to-night you are a sweet-tempered, mild-mannered, lady-like youth. How do you account for it, anyhow?"

VI.

THE SON-IN-LAW'S EXPLANATION.

"I FAWNCY you must have seen my  
father."

